



# ARMMA

NEWS





## AMAA NEWS

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31 West Century Road, Paramus, NJ 07652  
Tel: (201) 265-2607; Fax: (201) 265-6015  
E-mail: [info@amaa.org](mailto:info@amaa.org)  
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AMAA NEWS  
31 West Century Road  
Paramus, NJ 07652  
E-mail: [amaanews@amaa.org](mailto:amaanews@amaa.org)

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# Against the Tide

"You need to have courage to swim against the tide." **Pope Francis**

By **Zaven Khanjian**, Executive Director/CEO, AMAA

**G**rowing up in the Middle East, recollection of my conscious life mostly reveals a constant single direction of human migration to the West. It is true that our lives revolved around our insular communities and the notable migrating currents were from within. Not surprisingly, I discovered later in life that currents of indigenous Middle Eastern masses of other faiths and ethnicities also joined the constant Westward migration flow. Communities of (Greater) Syrian origin punctuate landmarks both in Europe and in North and South America.

Oppression, tyranny and persecution of minorities in the Ottoman Empire had long led to a smaller degree of flight to the West. A further splash deep in the history of mankind clearly reveals the constant flow of civilizations from their cradle in the Middle East toward the promising land of opportunities and safer new found territories of the West.

The realized promise of an independent Armenia did not change the direction of the flow. On the contrary, since independence, the Homeland has been one third depopulated losing 48,000 more people to the tide of exodus in 2016 alone ([www.anirc.am](http://www.anirc.am) ANI Armenian Research Center).

Pursuing a better life, education, freedom or escaping from persecution, tyranny or discrimination, the flow is a **going with the tide**. Natural, justified and far-sighted it may be, but **with the tide**.

On Sunday, January 29, 2017, a service, sponsored jointly by the Armenian Missionary Association of America and the Common Global Ministries Board of the United Church of Christ, the successor body of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, commissioned Philadelphia-born Rev. Nishan Bakalian, Pastor of the Armenian Martyrs Congregational Church since 2007, and Maria Bakalian as Missionaries to Beirut, Lebanon. On Tuesday, January 31, the Missionary couple left for the Middle East.

On Monday, January 30, 2017, Jerusalem-born Samuel Chekijian, a successful businessman, longtime resident of Boston, Massachusetts, and member of the Armenian Memorial Church in Watertown, passed away in his self-built residence in Yerevan. He had resettled in Armenia and extensively invested in the Homeland.

What do Rev. and Mrs. Bakalian and Mr. Chekijian have in common?

They all meaningfully exemplify a move **against the tide**. The world we know today is undergoing a great deal

of distress. Whether personal, ethnic, religious or regional anxiety, sorrow or physical and mental suffering, there is ample pain around that calls for attention and attendance. Driven by the fear of physical violence, discouraged by the lack of opportunities, disillusioned by shattered dreams and unrealized promises, hope is at the risk of extinction. Enter the courageous few, filled with the spirit of the greatest healer, Jesus Christ, His eternal love, ever enduring mercy, unlimited compassion and ultimate sacrifice, ready to move against the tide, injects hope, radiates love, reaches out, creates opportunities and provides comfort and peace.

The Bakalians set sail to a region plagued with violence, uncertainty, economic spiral, turmoil and poverty, a region daunted with fear, intolerance and anguish. Armed with love, knowledge and compassion, they will teach, mentor and advise. They will heal, encourage and sow hope.

Sam loved the Homeland, invested in Armenia, embarked on an ambitious construction project and built a uniquely luxurious residential complex. He created employment and supported families. He loved his Creator, worshiped at the Evangelical Church of Armenia and graciously funded the renovation of the Church Hall at Baghramyan. Sam loved Armenia's children and generously supported the Avedisian School.

Moving against the tide takes courage, involves risk taking and demands ample sacrifices. It is the hard and narrow road but one which leads to happiness experienced only by the few.

AMAA's Centennial Campaign embodies vehicles, endorses missions, empowers imagination, encourages 'homecoming' and enables potential moves **against the tide**. The AMAA's Centennial Campaign does not build empires or raise monuments. It builds and re-builds lives and resurrects hope.

Please keep Rev. and Mrs. Bakalian and Mr. Chekijian's loved ones in your prayers and partner with us to push back the tide and make our world and our Homeland a better place worthy of His glory. □



# A Resurrection Reflection

By **Rev. Haig Kherlopian\***



Jesus' victory over death reveals God's future for humanity. Our destiny is in the new creation where humankind will be given new bodies that are free from the disease of sin and decay. Because Jesus Christ has risen from the grave, the past is forgiven, death is defeated, and the future is eternally secured for those who belong to Him. The spreading of this amazing news along with the power of the Holy Spirit, which was unleashed at Pentecost, is what took a small Jewish sect and turned it into the world's largest religion. But is this all too good to be true?

Jesus' bodily resurrection was as difficult to accept in the first century as it is today in the twenty-first century. Regardless of where one stands on Jesus' bodily resurrection, three things cannot be denied, even if you are an atheist. The first is that the man Jesus Christ existed (you would be surprised how many educated people question this). The second is that He died by crucifixion under Pontius Pilate. And the third is that all the early Christians believed that their Lord and Savior bodily rose from the grave. This wasn't some myth contrived a hundred years after Jesus (again you would be surprised how many elites believe this) but was believed from the first followers of Christ who knew Him personally. The question up for debate is, why did the early Christians believe in the bodily resurrection of Jesus? Relatedly, why were they willing to die for Him?

In his letter to the Corinthians, the Apostle Paul addresses skeptics within the church who misunderstood the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ and who did not believe that there will be a future resurrection of the dead at the end of the age. Paul reiterates that Christ's resurrection is what makes the Good News good. It is the central event in which the whole Christian system stands. Without the bodily resurrection of Jesus, our faith is pointless and we are fools that need pitying (1st Corinthians 15:1-19). Paul refuted the Corinthians' skeptics by telling them to ask the eyewitnesses who had seen the risen Jesus Christ. After His resurrection, Jesus appeared to His disciples. Then He had appeared to five hundred brothers and sisters. Paul implied that those who doubted Jesus' resurrection could talk to the witnesses and listen to their story (1st Corinthians 15:6). We are not given this luxury of asking a witness from the first century, but we have something better — the Holy Bible. The New Testament is a collection of eyewitness accounts that revolve around the news that Jesus died for the forgiveness of sins and that He is alive and well today. In fact, the whole Bible points to Jesus' sacrificial death and resurrection. The Old Testament anticipates the coming of the saving messiah and the New Testament recollects the finished work of our Savior Jesus Christ.

In addition, we have access to God the Holy Spirit. Because of Jesus' ascension, we can receive the Holy Spirit by asking our Heavenly Father for it. The same Holy Spirit that was at work in the early church is at work today. The Holy Spirit is what gives the Gospel proclamation power and it is the Holy Spirit who enables people to know the resurrection of Jesus Christ to be true.

There was a time, when I was a sophomore in high school, where I denied Jesus. At the time, I was in deep despair and angry with the world. I couldn't trust the Bible or all the Christians in my life telling me about the risen Jesus. But, that all changed one night during the winter when I surrendered my life to Christ. I asked the Lord if He was real to end this pain I was feeling. That moment the Holy Spirit's presence completely saturated my room and I experienced the joy, love and peace of His presence. A deep love emerged for my risen Savior and Lord.

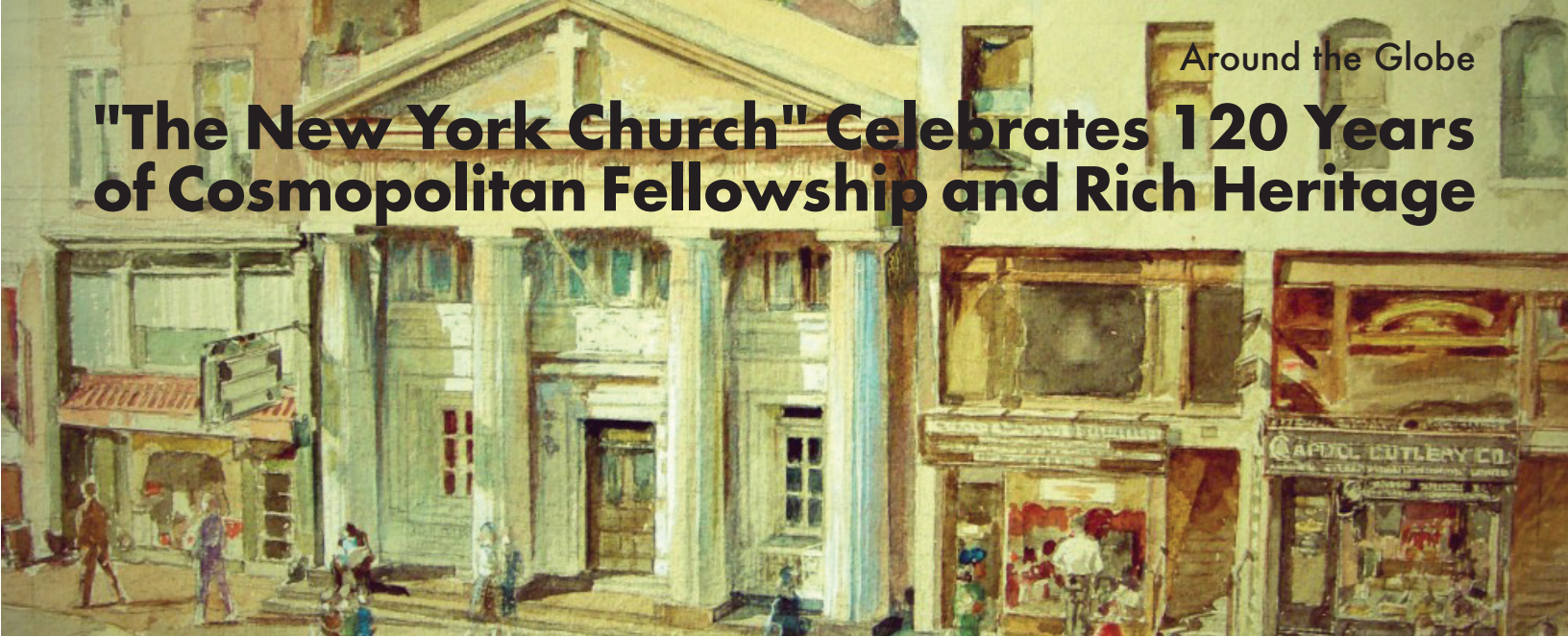
Later that night, I was reading the Gospel of John where Jesus says, "You study the Scriptures diligently because you think that in them you have eternal life. These are the very Scriptures that testify about me, yet you refuse to come to me to have life" (John 5:39-40). It was as if that verse jumped out and hit me over the head. After I read that verse, I couldn't put my Bible down and spent the whole week reading it. I saw how the entire Old Testament was pointing to Jesus Christ and how the New Testament was pointing back to Christ's death and resurrection.

Jesus' resurrection is the central belief of first generation Christians and it remains the central belief today. Without the resurrection, there is nothing good about the Good News of Jesus. His victory over sin and death is God's gift to us. I now look to my own testimony, the witness of Christians over the past two millennia, and the Holy Scriptures all testifying to Jesus' death, resurrection and ascension. All I can say now is "Amen!" I need to share this news with the world! □

*\* Reverend Haig Kherlopian is the Pastor of the Armenian Evangelical Church of New York.*



# "The New York Church" Celebrates 120 Years of Cosmopolitan Fellowship and Rich Heritage



By **Peter Kougasian, Esq.**, Moderator, Armenian Evangelical Church of New York

**N**ew York City can seem somewhat impersonal and overwhelming to newcomers, but natives know it is really a series of neighborhoods, each as intimate as any small town. So it is that for 120 years the faithful have found a warm and welcoming community at the Armenian Evangelical Church of New York – the AECNY, or simply, "The New York Church."

The Church traces its roots to prayer meetings held in a private home and at a Bowery mission in the early 1880s. But the Church, under its current name, began on November 14, 1896 in a sanctuary provided by the Adams Memorial Presbyterian Church. A theology student from Turkey, Rev. H.H. Khazoyan, served as the Church's first Pastor.

As persecutions in Turkey continued, culminating in the 1915 Genocide, growing numbers of Armenian Christians settled in New York, eventually establishing a "Little Armenia" on the eastside of midtown Manhattan. There Armenians established homes, food shops, legendary restaurants, and of course, churches. In 1921 a donation from the Telfeyan family helped purchase the AECNY's current home, a former bank building at 152 East 34th Street. Today, we think of this central location as standing in the shadows of the United Nations and the Empire State Buildings – but when the New York Church arrived, neither of those landmarks was even so much a dream.

From the start, the New York Church prided itself on several core values: a devotion to Biblical faith; reverence for scholarship and learning; a cosmopolitan congregation; a love of the arts; and dedication to the AMAA.

To this day, the Church is most closely associated with the pastorate of the legendary Rev. A.A. Bedikian, who served as minister from 1915 to 1953. Longtime parishioners still recall the eloquence, scholarship and plainspoken faith Rev. Bedikian brought to his sermons. The Church still gives a literary award in his name. In more recent years, Rev. Dr. Peter Doghramji came out of retirement to lead the Church, delivering sermons of such eloquence that, at the urging of church leadership, a collection of his messages was published: *In Other Words*.

The Church has also continued its tradition of cosmopolitan fellowship, as on any given Sunday one might find in its pews

Armenians from anywhere in America, Europe, the Near East, and indeed the four corners of the globe; as well as non-Armenian Evangelicals visiting New York on vacation, and foreign diplomats assigned to the United Nations. And when worship is concluded, everyone heads downstairs for New York's most elaborate, joyous, enthusiastic, and nearly interminable fellowship hour. Here, strangers who hail from opposite sides of the earth inevitably discover that they are distantly related on their mothers' side.

And the Church has traditionally taken rich advantage of its location in a great cultural capital. The music ministry in particular has been central to Sunday services. Shortly after settling into its home on 34th Street, the Church installed an Ernest Skinner pipe organ, considered one of the finest of its time. And for decades, the Church has tapped the rich artistic resources of New York, hiring a professional Choirmaster and professional voices, trained in some of the world's leading conservatories.

But as Christ taught us, nothing that the Church does within its own walls would be of value if it overlooked the needs, both spiritual and material, of its neighbors. In this regard, the New York Church is especially proud of its long association with the AMAA.

While the legend is not quite true that the AMAA began at the New York Church, it is certainly true that members of the New York Church were among the AMAA's founders. In particular, Rev. A.A. Bedikian served repeatedly as AMAA Executive Secretary,



in a period extending from 1921 to 1946. And the Church recalls with pride that legendary Executive Director Rev. Dr. Movses Janbazian was a member of the New York Church, and was also ordained into Christian ministry in this Church. It was during Rev. Janbazian's leadership that the New York Church commemorated its Centennial by establishing a \$100,000 endowment fund at the AMAA.

Today, the neighborhood of "Little Armenia" is no more; indeed, one can stroll the streets of the eastside without encountering a single Armenian restaurant. Few of the parishioners of the New York Church walk to services; more likely they drive, some for over an hour, to attend. But the essential traditions are still very much in evidence: a devotion to biblical faith, stirring

music, and memorable sermons, today delivered by the dynamic young minister Rev. Haig Kherlopian, a Princeton Theological Seminary graduate who enlists both heart and head in giving praise to our Savior.

On the evening of Saturday, June 10, at the **Liberty House** in Jersey City, NJ, the Church will conclude a year-long celebration of its 120th Anniversary with a gala dinner. And, proving the endurance of great traditions, chairing the Banquet Committee will be Jennifer Telfeyan LaRoe – a member of the same Telfeyan family who helped the Church find its home in New York, nearly a century ago! As always at the AECNY, the whole world is invited. For more information you may visit [www.aecnyc.org/120th-anniversary](http://www.aecnyc.org/120th-anniversary). □

## Almost a Hundred Years Later: "You're a Telfeyan, Too?"

By Heather Ohaneson, Ph.D.

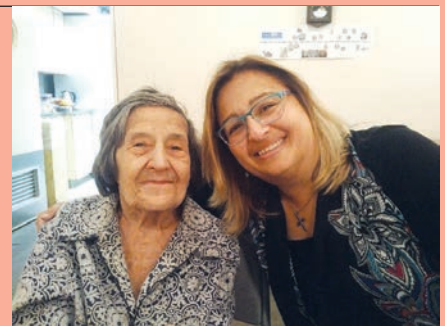
**P**salm 133 beckons us to "behold how very good and pleasant it is when kindred live together in unity." Imagine that several decades from now, say in 2110, your great-grandchildren are appreciating the fellowship of your sibling's grandchildren — at a church gathering, nonetheless. Doesn't it bring a smile to your face to think of love spreading throughout and among your family's generations in that way?

At the Armenian Evangelical Church of New York (AEC), there was recently a sweet and surprising reunion of two descendants of John G. Telfeyan, who, with his brother Sarkis, donated funds in 1921 for the church building on New York City's 34<sup>th</sup> Street. Following its service on Sunday, November 13, 2016, which was conducted by Rev. Haig Kherlopian, the AEC held a celebration in honor of the 120<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Church's first official service, held on November 14, 1896. At the delicious luncheon following the service, Anahid Iskian and Jennifer Telfeyan discovered their distant relation, as Armenians are wont to do. Nearly one hundred years old, Anahid is the niece of Venus Iskian, the second wife of John Telfeyan. Her junior by many years, Jennifer is John Telfeyan's great-granddaughter.

Anahid's presence at the meal delighted other AEC members, including Peter, Beth, and Alex Kougasian. As Peter described Anahid, she is a "rare manuscript expert, fine art dealer, francophone and Francophile. Around every turn awaits another surprise – a story, a gem of wisdom, a word of appreciation and encouragement, or a *bon mot*."

Following in the footsteps of John and Sarkis, Jennifer is exercising generosity and faithfulness as she invests in the metropolitan evangelical church. Having returned to New York in 2013, she has been instrumental in organizing programs like the monthly luncheons, which have helped revitalize community life and raise funds at a time when the congregation's economic outlook is bleak. She's also spearheading a bigger venture – the Armenian Evangelical Church's 120<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Banquet and celebration on June 10-11, 2017, to which all are warmly invited. Treasured family reunions are expected there.

Information on upcoming events at the Armenian Evangelical Church of New York, including monthly luncheons and the 120<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Banquet, may be found online at <http://aecnyc.org> or by calling (212) 685-3177.



Anahid Iskian and Jennifer Telfeyan.





# Samuel Chekijian

## 1936-2017

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**S**amuel Chekijian, a major benefactor of the AMAA, passed away in Yerevan, Armenia on January 30, 2017. He was 80. Sam was born on July 23, 1936 in Jerusalem, Palestine to Mary and Youhanna Chekijian. At the age of 20 he immigrated to the United States with his family. He and his family members established themselves in the Boston, MA area where they remain today.

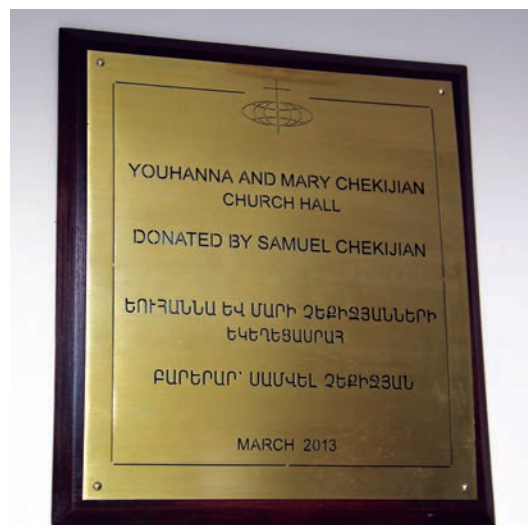
In Jerusalem, Sam trained as a jeweler under the apprenticeship of his uncle Sarkis. Upon his arrival in Boston, he continued to work in the jewelry business becoming a well-respected dealer of pearls, diamonds and fine gemstones. His work called for extensive travel and allowed him to often visit India, the Far East and Europe.

Upon his retirement from the jewelry business in 2015, Sam resided in Armenia where he chose to begin a new professional endeavor as builder of a condominium building in Yerevan overlooking the Cascade. He was a committed supporter of the Armenian Missionary Association of America, the American University of Armenia and the Avedisian School.

Sam was always calm, friendly, kind, humble, respectful and compassionate. He loved the AMAA and loved Armenia, creating employment for many in the Fatherland. He loved working and was an example to all who knew him.

Sam remained sincerely devoted to his entire family. He was predeceased by his father Youhanna, mother Mary Norashkanian Chekijian and brother Vahan. He leaves behind his sister Hermine Chekijian Adamian (Edwin Adamian) of Wellesley, MA; brother Yervant Chekijian of Watertown, MA; nieces Susan Adamian Covo (Peter Covo) of Wellesley and Sharon Chekijian (Yaghjyan) (Gevorg Yaghjyan) of New Haven, CT and great nieces Ruth and Martha Covo.

A funeral service and burial were held in Yerevan. A memorial service and luncheon will be held at the Armenian Memorial Church, Watertown, MA on April 1. Donations in Sam's memory may be made to the Avedisian School c/o Armenian Missionary Association of America, 31 West Century Rd., Paramus, NJ 07652. □



*Plaque displayed at the Hall of the Evangelical Church of Armenia in Yerevan.*

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# Meet Our Veteran Pastors

## Rev. Dr. Joseph Alexanian

**R**ev. Dr. Joseph Manuel Alexanian was born in 1930 to Manuel and Priscilla Yeghoyan Alexanian in Oakland, California, the older of two children. His maternal grandfather was the renowned pastor and evangelist, Rev. Assadour Yeghoyan.

Joseph attended local public schools, graduating from high school in 1948. He acquired a love for music from his parents and studied piano and cornet at an early age. Throughout his public school and college years, Joseph played the cornet in school and community bands, orchestras, and in musical ensembles.

From his parents, Joseph learned to love God and to trust Christ for salvation. In 1944, during a worship service in Fresno, California, he committed his life to the Lord. In addition to his family, his home church, Bethany Armenian Congregational Church of Oakland, played an important role in his spiritual growth.

Following graduation from high school, he attended Wheaton College in Wheaton, Illinois, graduating summa cum laude in 1952.

After attending Wheaton Graduate School for a year, he transferred to Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, California. He graduated cum laude from Fuller in 1955 with a master of divinity degree. While at the Seminary, Joseph married the former Esther Chetakian in 1954. They were blessed with two sons, Daniel and David, and two daughters, JoAnn and Debra.

Joseph was ordained to the Christian ministry in 1955 in the Bethany Armenian Congregational Church by a Vicinage Council of Congregational Churches and ministers. In 1975, he transferred his ministerial standing to the Conservative Congregational Christian Conference.

Rev. and Mrs. Alexanian went to Beirut, Lebanon in 1955 and taught full-time at Central High School (CHS) in Eshrefieh, Lebanon. He also inspired his sister Pauline Esther Alexanian Khanjian to join him in teaching at CHS. One of their students, Hagop Bozabalian, became Archbishop Nerses Bozabalian, Chancellor of the Catholicosate in Etchmiadzin, Armenia. He has since passed away. While in Lebanon, Joseph's wife Esther also taught at CMC Hospital in the nursing program.

During the second year of their stay in Beirut, Rev. Alexanian received a call from Bethany Armenian Congregational Church in Oakland, California to become the pastor. He accepted the call and served Bethany Church from 1957 to 1962. During his ministry, he was elected and served as Moderator of the Armenian Evangelical Union of California, from 1959 to 1960. He visited all the Armenian Evangelical churches throughout California, meeting with pastors and boards to discuss their needs and challenges.

In the summer of 1962, Rev. Alexanian made a change in his vocational career. After a time of personal assessment, he came to the conclusion that he could better fulfill God's call to teach the scriptures in the teaching profession rather than in the pastorate. He was accepted into the doctoral program of the department of humanities at the University of Chicago (UC).

During the next three years, from 1962 to 1965, the Rev. Alexanian completed the course requirements for the UC. After arriving in Chicago, the Alexanians became members of the Bethany Evangelical Covenant Church. Shortly after, when the pastor of the church moved to Seattle, Washington, the Board of Bethany asked Rev. Alexanian to fill the pulpit Sunday mornings and evenings as often as possible. After a few months, Bethany Church extended an invitation to Pastor Joseph to be the full-time minister. After declining the church's offer three times, Rev. Alexanian allowed his name to be considered as a candidate. With acclamation, he was elected Pastor of Bethany. The Alexanians lived on the south side of Chicago near the church.

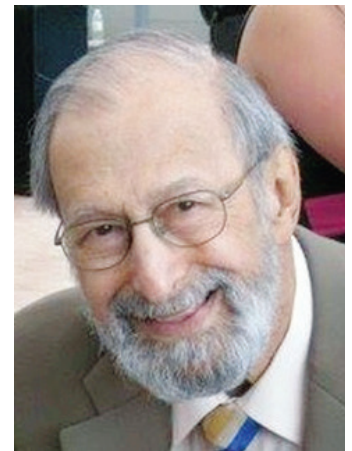
In 1969, Redeemer Covenant Church merged with Bethany Church, and the two churches became the Beverly Evangelical Covenant Church, with Rev. Alexanian as the minister. The merged church had 700 members.

After having guided the two congregations through the transition period, Rev. Alexanian felt he needed to return to his doctoral studies. During the next four years, from 1969 to 1973, he completed all the necessary research and analysis for his doctoral dissertation entitled, "The Armenian Version in Luke and the Question of the Caesarian Text." Meanwhile, he was offered a teaching position at Trinity College in Deerfield, Illinois. He began his teaching career at Trinity College as an assistant professor. Over the years, he advanced in rank to full professor of Biblical studies and became Chairman of the department of Biblical studies. He held this position from 1973 until his retirement in 1995.

In July 1994, Dr. Alexanian taught at St. Nersess Seminary in Armonk, New York and in 1995 he taught for two weeks at the Armenian Evangelical Theological Academy in Yerevan, Armenia.

During his academic career, Dr. Alexanian published eleven scholarly articles in various prestigious journals and books and he presented ten major papers to seminars and symposiums. He received a number of awards, and continues to hold membership in more than a dozen academic and religious organizations. Among many articles and publications, Dr. Alexanian published a critical edition of the ancient Armenian text of Acts.

Dr. and Mrs. Alexanian moved to the state of Washington in 1995 to be nearer to most of their children and other family members. Currently, Rev. Dr. Alexanian is continuing his research while participating in various ministries of the Armenian Evangelical Union of North America and Armenian Missionary Association of America. He continues to preach and teach in churches when asked. □



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This biography is an amended version of Rev. Dr. Joseph Alexanian's biography in Rev. Dr. Vahan H. Tootikian's book "Fifty Years of Christian Service," 2000, pages 30-32.





*"But one thing I know is that things will change, for better or worse. How do I know? I don't see the change, I'm living the change."* **HRANT DINK (1954-2007)**

A decade ago, on January 19, 2007, Hrant Dink, the Turkish-Armenian journalist, editor of AGOS, a hero who defied the Turkish taboo of silence on the subject of the Armenian Genocide, was gunned down outside the offices of AGOS in Istanbul.

The prominent British journalist, correspondent of the London 'INDEPENDENT' in the Middle East, Robert Fisk, described Hrant Dink as the 1,500,001st victim of the Armenian Genocide.

The shock was overwhelming even for Turkish society. So much that a hundred thousand of them walked in the procession of his funeral, carrying signs, banners and placards reading "we are all Hrant Dink," "we are all Armenians."

Hrant Dink was one of the most prominent students of another Hrant, Hrant Guzelian, who through his sparkling Christian faith "embarked on a mission of search and rescue of children of endangered Armenian families in Anatolia by bringing them to Istanbul, enrolling them in schools ("The Youth Home of Istanbul" and later "Camp Armen") and educating them with the elements of the Armenian culture."

Hrant Dink was a shining star among the students. After contributing to the building of Camp Armen in Tuzla he grew up to take a leadership role in the Gedik Pasa Armenian Evangelical Church after the seizure of the Camp by the Turkish authorities and Guzelian's arrest and exile.

A study of Hrant Dink's life reveals that the story of the Tuzla Camp, its creation and its seizure by the Turkish authorities, the childhood labor invested and the earthly heaven (Hrant's ATLANTIS) created there, left a deep scar on his psyche that went on to be the driving force in his years of struggle for the return of Camp Armen, for justice, fairness, freedom of expression, minority rights and true democracy for all Turkish citizens under Turkish law.

On January 19, 2007 Hrant Dink was slain.

The 17 year old teenager assassin, Ogun Samast, was the trigger man. But the murder was committed by the forces of darkness, by Turkish penal code 301, by Deep State in the Republic of Turkey.

Hrant's struggle partially paid off. On October 27, 2015 Camp Armen was returned to the Gedik Pasa Armenian Evangelical Church in Istanbul.

But 101 years after the Genocide and 10 years after Dink's assassination the Turkish State still lies in a deep coma of denial.

We share Dink's values of justice, fairness, freedom of expressions and true democracy in the land he justifiably called home.

We thank God for the legacy and bow to the memory of the martyred hero.

We firmly believe that his blood was not shed in vain and his voice will never be silenced!

**Zaven Khanjian**





## A "Thank you" for the Generous Donations to the *Stitched with Love* Mission



By Betty Cherkezian

Since its inception in 2013, *Stitched with Love* has grown steadily in terms of both gifts received and the number of people participating. A solid core of dedicated knitters is now providing the program with beautiful well-crafted baby hats, blankets, children's scarves, sweaters and socks. Twice a year deliveries are made to Armenia in time for the Christmas and Easter Holidays.

The AMAA makes its distributions to various programs such as the Armenian Children's Milk Fund Program, the Avedisian School, the Nerses Aynilian Clinic, and to the families of the Melanya Community in Yerevan and many other outskirt communities. *Stitched with Love* also donates to the AGBU Hye Geen programs in several locations for their expectant mothers.

One of the most gratifying aspects of the program is the dedicated support of dozens of knitters/crocheters from across North America who send their handwork to the program. They include donors from New Jersey, New York, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, Maine, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, North Carolina, Tennessee, Florida, Illinois, Michigan, California and Canada.

I have come to know our supporters by their work, their beautiful heartfelt notes, their phone calls and now by their faces. These knitters are globally united through serving for the same mission of helping our Motherland. Each of the items sent are truly "Stitched with Love" and are received by our children, with even greater Love.

On behalf of the AMAA and all of our beautiful children, I want to thank our supporters for being part of the *Stitched with Love* family. We are grateful for your support and dedication to this continuing mission. God Bless.

If you would like to learn how you can contribute, please visit the AMAA website ([www.amaa.org](http://www.amaa.org)) and click on the *Stitched with Love* link under *Armenia* in *Projects* to learn more.







# AMAA Shares the Joy of Christmas with over 9,000 Children Throughout Armenia and Karabagh

In late December until the end of winter vacation, the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA), in collaboration with the Evangelical Church of Armenia, once again organized 45 Christmas and New Year's programs in 30 towns and cities throughout Armenia and Karabagh. Through these programs, they shared God's love and brought "Christmas Joy" to more than 9,000 children and their families from the AMAA's Sponsorship Program, Sunday Schools, Avedisian School and social and art centers. The real message of Christmas was proclaimed through music, recitations, games and drama which conveyed the meaning and the importance of the birth of Jesus. Each program included a special visit from Santa who distributed "Christmas Joy" boxes of school supplies, socks, mittens, candy, toys, Christmas story activity booklets, puzzles and coloring books to the children.

In Karabagh, most of the 1,500 children who participated in these programs were children of martyred soldiers and from needy families. Special Christmas programs were also organized in nine border villages in the region of Tavush, in the Children's Rehabilitation Center of Spitak for 30 autistic children and in the Martuni village where many of the inhabitants are descendants of the Armenian Genocide survivors.

The highlight of these Christmas programs took place on January 11 and 12 at the AMAA Center on Baghramyan Street in Yerevan for more than 1,500 children. The AMAA's Hayasa theatrical group presented a beautiful and exciting drama entitled "The Secret of Joy," which was staged and directed by Nune Abrahamyan.

On behalf of the AMAA and of thousands of participating children, we thank those who prayed for and contributed to these

Christmas programs. We are also very appreciative of the many volunteers who assembled "Christmas Joy" boxes.

The AMAA would especially like to thank Nelson Randolph and Al Jibilian who coordinated purchasing and shipping the Christmas gifts from the United States to Armenia. Mr. Randolph and Mr. Jibilian traveled to Armenia with volunteers and assisted with assembling and packing the Christmas Joy boxes with other volunteers from the AMAA Center in Yerevan. Since the men's involvement over the last few years, the AMAA's Christmas Joy Program has been strengthened and continues to grow.

We praise God for enabling us to reach out to these children with the love of Jesus Christ. □







# AMAA's Humanitarian Medical Aid to the Armenian Army

Recently the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA), through the gracious effort of AMAA member Dr. Chris Tashjian, donated medical equipment, instruments and beds valued at \$400,000 to the RA Ministry of Defense. The official presentation was held on February 20 at the Medical Central Base of the Defense Ministry. Harout Nercessian, AMAA's Armenia Representative, Lusine Ohanyan, Coordinator of AMAA-Armenia's External Affairs, and Major Nver Arakelyan, Chief Commander of Medical Central Base, were present.

"These items are all extremely necessary for our hospitals and other medical institutions," said Major Arakelyan in his opening

remarks, "and they will contribute to the improvement of our medical care and services. I must emphasize that this is not the first aid we are receiving from AMAA. In 2015, the Association donated numerous electronically controlled hospital beds and equipment. I want to thank the AMAA for helping our Army."

Mr. Nercessian explained that this assistance was implemented by the AMAA on behalf of the MATTER organization and the transportation was financed by Dr. Tashjian. He also stressed that the equipment and tools were thoroughly examined before they were shipped to Armenia. He assured us that this kind of aid to the Ministry of Defense for medical institutions will continue in the future. □



*Harout Nercessian presents the list of donated medical equipment.*



*Major Nver Arakelyan, Harout Nercessian and Lusine Ohanyan.*



# Armenian Children's Milk Fund Continues to Make Lifelong Impact


**P**roper nutrition is a guaranteed foundation for optimal growth and development of every child as well as for strengthening the body's resistance to illness. As poverty in Armenia continues to impact one-third of the population, newborns and infants are left especially vulnerable. As a means of helping to combat malnutrition, the Armenian Children's Milk Fund (ACMF) is committed to continue giving Armenia's most vulnerable citizens a healthy start to life.

When it comes to choosing the best source of nutrition for an infant, it is always an individual journey. The Armenian Children's Milk Fund has assisted thousands of families with their individual circumstances. Purchasing formula can quickly become a financial hardship and the ACMF is committed to helping to ease this burden by providing either monthly allotments or on an as-needed basis.

With the support of caring members, such as you, the AMAA can sustain this special program and continue giving a gift of love which lasts a lifetime.

**Make Your Gift of Love Today and Help Give Infants a Healthy Start to Life.**



Support the Armenian Children's Milk Fund program at the AMAA. A gift of \$25 will feed one infant for one month; \$300 will feed a child for one year. 

**I would like to support and enable ACMF to continue making a difference in the lives of Armenia's most vulnerable citizens. A gift of \$25 will feed one child for one month, \$300 will feed one child for one year.**

Enclosed is my donation in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Credit Card info. ☐ MasterCard ☐ Visa ☐ Discover ☐ Amex

Acct. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_

Celebrate a birthday, a special occasion or the memory of a loved one.

Gift made (check one) ☐ in honor of ☐ in memory of

\_\_\_\_\_

Name and address to send tribute/acknowledgment \_\_\_\_\_

Please make all checks payable to the Armenian Missionary Association of America (memo: Milk Fund) or make a donation online today at [www.amaa.org](http://www.amaa.org) by clicking on the DONATE button.

# A Time of Ending and Sending

By Jeannette Keshishian

**O**n Sunday, January 29, 2017, Badveli Nishan and Maria Bakalian were commissioned as missionaries to Beirut, Lebanon. After months of discussions, intensive meetings and report-writing, representatives of the sponsoring agencies – the AMAA and the Common Global Ministries Board of the United Church of Christ and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) – gathered at the Armenian Martyrs' Congregational Church, Havertown, PA for a Service of Commissioning. Representing the AMAA was Zaven Khanjian, Executive Director/CEO of the AMAA; and, from the Common Global Ministries Board, the Rev. Dr. Peter Makari, Area Executive for the Middle East and Europe. Also present at this service was Rev. William Worley, Conference Minister of the Penna.Southeast Conference of the United Church of Christ.

The Service of Commissioning was incorporated into the Sunday worship service; the Rev. Carol Sarian Ballester served as liturgist. As he had done each Sunday during his near decade-long tenure at AMCC, Badveli Nishan gathered the children at the chancel and gave them their final Children's Message about obeying the Lord wherever He leads you. Since this Sunday was also AMAA Sunday, Mr. Khanjian shared a presentation about the AMAA's mission efforts around the world. He also gave the Armenian Meditation based on Mark 16:20, challenging the Bakalians to go into the world with creativity and compassion, bearing God's love and hope. Badveli Nishan and Maria joined the choir in singing the anthem, "Order My Steps" (Burleigh/Schrader). Rev. Worley's message "Now What?" celebrated Badveli Nishan and Maria's ministry in Havertown and encouraged the congregation, saying that God is already preparing someone in the world to come to Havertown as the new pastor.

Following his sermon, Rev. Worley led the congregation in a meaningful Recognition of the Ending of the Ministry of Rev. Bakalian at Armenian Martyrs' Church and the church's Vows of Release. Moving directly into the Commissioning Service, Rev. Dr. Makari gave an overview of the Common Global Ministries Board, including its history as the successor body of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. The Candidates were introduced to Rev. Dr. Makari by Mr. Khanjian, who gave a view of the responsibilities that Badveli Nishan and Maria will be shouldering. For Badveli Nishan, this includes being Special Staff for Ministry, Communications and Leadership Development for the Union of Armenian Evangelical Churches in the Near East (UAECNE). For Maria, it means working as support staff for Haigazian University, assisting the KCHAG Conference Center committees, and in other areas as needed. Both will travel to Armenia annually to assist with the AMAA's and the Evangelical Church of Armenia's needs there.



*L to R: Maria and Rev. Nishan Bakalian, Rev. Dr. Peter Makari and Zaven Khanjian.*



*Rev. Nishan and Maria Bakalian with Rev. Dr. Peter Doghramji (center).*

Rev. Dr. Makari addressed the candidates, now appointees, recognizing their acceptance of the call to work and witness with the UAECNE, being jointly supported by the AMAA and the Common Ministries Board. The congregation and the church's Missions Committee also pledged their support of the Bakalians' mission and ministry. Rev. Sarian Ballester read a letter of congratulations from Rev. Berdj Djambazian, Minister to the AEUNA.

Rev. Dr. Peter B. Doghramji, former pastor of AMCC, past Penna. Southeast Conference Minister, former Executive Director of the AMAA, and a minister to the very same regions the Bakalians are going, closed with words of blessing upon the new missionaries before pronouncing the Benediction.

The Missions Committee prepared a hearty lunch for all to enjoy as they greeted the Bakalians and each other. Though the congregation will miss their former pastor and wife, all are grateful that they will continue to be a blessing to many in their new home. □



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# New Missionaries Go Into the World To Preach, To Serve

AMAA's Executive Director/CEO Zaven Khanjian's Message at  
the Commissioning Service of Rev. Nishan and Maria Bakalian



**Dear Sister and Brother in Christ,  
Nishan and Maria,**

This morning, in this Sanctuary, we are called to celebrate the commissioning of your new ministry. The wish to serve, I would say the desire to serve, is yours, we are the enablers of that wish.

We all know the meaning of the word "Missionary." It is a phenomenon that is coherent with our contemporary history. Although in the Armenian language (and especially in the formal name of AMAA) it is translated as "Avedaranich – Evangelist," in my understanding a "Missionary" is a person with wider responsibility and mission. An Evangelist is called, on any ground, or in the "whole world," to preach the Gospel - a servant, who spreads the Word of God. However, a Missionary is a person who is aware of the wider perimeter of his service. There is

a predetermined mission here and that clearly requires work.

Examples that come to mind are the famous medical missionaries David Livingston in Africa and Hudson Taylor in China. In the Ottoman Empire, linguist Elias Riggs and educator Henry Riggs were missionaries who served the Armenians.

Therefore, even though these words – Missionary and Evangelist – could be synonyms, I am going to call you Missionaries in Armenian, because you have the knowledge, ability, potential and desire far beyond just being an Evangelist.

I love the Apostle James and the exhortation given by him without mumbling the words: "What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save them?" James 2:14.

So, moved from this common denominator and the meaning of the word "Missionary" in my dictionary, on behalf of the Armenian Missionary Association of America, I am pleased to be a part of this Commissioning Service and salute you on your commissioning.

I have a word of gratitude from the AMAA to both of you. You are individually and jointly partners of the Association. Without you, our applause will not echo, nor will it have its consequences. You are that second hand, and only with the union of two hands can our vision and mission be accomplished. Thank you for your commitment to dismantle your home, travel abroad, and with dedicated willingness serve in a new, yet in reality an ancient world. Thank you for your sacrifice of leaving behind the "taken for granted and worry-free" benefits of the Western world.

The mission field of the AMAA is infinite. The Lord commanded us: "Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to all creation." Mark 16:15.

The field of Preaching the Gospel and serving humanity with the example of Christ is boundless. The resources of the AMAA however, are of course limited. Despite the limitations, we encourage you to flap your wings, boost your imagination and with a creative spirit expand the field of your service.

There are people longing for a visit or prayer. Others, who are oppressed and long for love, affection and encouragement, the hungry and the thirsty need a piece of bread or a glass of water. It is vital to see the need and reach out. Look around, focus, open your compass wide and expand your field of service. Deliver the understanding of God's goodness to the widest of the masses. Broaden your vision and imagination. The AMAA is not and cannot be stagnant and is ready to take a leap with you.

As your humble lay brother, I bring to your attention the following advice which I hope and pray can be beneficial principles for the success of your mission and tips to bear in mind.

1. As servants coming from a different culture and a place far away, you will be the subject of attention. Society will look up to you and heed your example. Bear this in mind in your behaviors. Live a life that reflects the Christ you are preaching. Refrain from prejudice. Put the rich and the poor on the same pedestal. Be humble and gentle. Greatness is not in a position or title but in Christ-like humility.
2. Be communicable, industrious, lively, attentive and active. You are called to work and work does not recognize draw back, retreat, step back or laziness. In work, we shouldn't only be diligent but also timely and punctual. Your actions will be correlated with the lives of others and it is not acceptable to endanger the fate of others as a result of neglect.
3. Do not get discouraged when you face hopelessness or a rocky path. You will be in a tumultuous region, which perhaps over the past 70 years has seen various degrees of upheaval. People in general experience economic, social and psychological challenges and are subject to distress, depression, anxiety and inactivity. The experiences of the past wars and the apprehension of the next, cast them into the arms of hopelessness. They need the continuous injection of hope, which you are going to provide. In your weakness, anchor your self-confidence in the Holy Spirit, where you will find the spring of your strength and confidence.
4. "And the greatest of this is love" testifies Apostle Paul. Man's salvation, as expressed in the divine incarnation that led to the eventual supreme sacrifice on the Cross, can be summed up in a single word – Love. "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." There is no other alternative to the strength and effect of the power of the manifestation of love. Service, care, affection and teaching rendered and demonstrated with love can open miraculous doors, secure success of your labor and ensure the comprehension of your teachings. Everyone needs the warm radiation of God's love. Love is the key to success. Do not deny anyone of it.
5. Finally, maintain a diary. Experiences like yours are worthy to survive the annals of history not only because they create interest, but even more for the lessons that can be reaped and for the retention of the accurate citation of historical representations.

I trust you this bouquet of thoughts expressed with brotherly love and solicitude, and hope that you will truly practice them in your mission.

I wish you God's blessing, a safe journey, infinite spiritual nutrition, and unimaginable success on the horizon of your mission.

Thank you.



## HOW ARE WE DOING?

Please take a moment to fill out the enclosed survey about the AMAA News which is on the envelope in the middle section of this issue.

We don't just want to meet your expectations, we aim to surpass them. To do that we need to know what you think we're doing right, and more importantly, if there's anything we could do better!

We value your feedback. Your responses will help us maintain the quality of our publication.





# God's Faithfulness

## The Armenian Evangelical Boarding School of Anjar, Lebanon

By Nanor Kelenjian Akbasharian

**W**itnessing the growth of children helps us experience God's faithfulness. Childhood is a critical phase in every human being's life; therefore, every experience makes a huge difference in shaping the character of a person. Having in mind the importance of our roles as caregivers in the Armenian Evangelical Boarding School in Anjar, we started to plan and prepare ourselves to welcome 60 boarders in September 2016.

Similar to the past years, the caregivers knew ahead the number of new boarders as well as the number of the boarders who left and the ones who will continue with us, but little did we know that we would experience tremendous miracles every day. The first day at the boarding school was significant, observing the arriving children and seeing each other after the summer vacation and seeing their caregivers gave me goose bumps. Some kids had tears in their eyes, some had sparkles of joy and some were very quiet only observing their new home and watching the other boarders. It was interesting how the boarders had missed each other and how some of the newcomers were trying to mingle. On the other hand, there was a new boarder who grabbed my attention and, in a few lines, I will share my impressions in this article.

S. A. are the initials of an 8 year old boy. I knew his family history as well as his medical problem because I had already seen him during the home visits and interviews before he came to Anjar. S.A. was standing quietly in the corner of the basketball court watching the other boarders. I knew he had vision problems and his right eyesight was only 10%; moreover, this created problems for S.A. in his old school which affected him greatly. When I approached him, I realized the tears in his eyes but he tried to hide them and greeted me with a low voice, but after a few seconds he hugged me suddenly and started to cry. S.A. was afraid, he had fear of rejection and darkness and as he was crying, he asked me if he could stay with me all the time since I was the only one who had seen him before.

I had a rush of emotions inside my heart because I knew very well his family story. I knew that the origin of his fear of rejection was the result of his careless and ignorant father and the fear of



darkness was the result of the poor eyesight. His tears were the consequences of the physical abuse that he lived with for many years in Beirut. After crying and talking for long hours, I tried to explain that he was now in a safe environment and no one would hurt him. On the contrary he would be provided with the best care, but I knew that my explanation would not be the reassurance he was searching for. The coming days in the boarding school would prove my words and he would start gaining his self-esteem.

The first two weeks were very tough for him. He took a lot of time to mingle with the other boarders, although he got all the support from the caregivers and his peers. After two weeks S.A. was a different person. Instead of tears there was a smile on his face. He experienced tender loving care for the first time in his life; moreover, he was introduced to God's word and love during the worship chapels that we have.

Observing the change in S.A. motivated us all. We do believe that the progress in this child's life was not only from our efforts, but also the touch of our heavenly Father. This is an example that I wanted to share with you all. May God be glorified with the work we are doing to change the lives of our boarders.

**"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven."** (Matthew 5:16) □





# Relief is Still Needed in Syria



**A**MAA's relief efforts remain strong in Syria – whether it is direct relief provided to the remaining community in Aleppo or providing a **LifeLine** and new opportunities for those who seek to leave and begin anew in the Homeland -Armenia.

With the unification of the City of Aleppo and the departure of extremist militants from it, Aleppo has enjoyed a measure of safety since mid-December. Even though the barrage of shells, mortars and rockets have ceased, the trials of acquiring the basic necessities for a decent daily life remain. Running water and electricity in Aleppo have once again been cut-off. Unemployment, lack of vital services and inadequate medical care persist in plaguing war-torn Aleppo. The impoverished communities desperately need our help!

## Relief Ministry Held During Christmas Season in Aleppo

**T**he Armenian Evangelical Social Action Committee of Aleppo, Syria initiated programs to assist Armenian families during the Christmas Season.

A special relief ministry was held on December 27 where more than 200 Armenian families gathered in the "Poladian Hall" of the Bethel Armenian Evangelical School of Aleppo. The program began with welcoming words from Rev. Haroutune Selimian, President of the Armenian Evangelical Community in Syria, who expressed his gratitude to the Social Action Committee members and those who served faithfully during the Christmas Season. Gratitude was also expressed to the Armenian Missionary Association of America for its continuous support.

After the short Christmas Program, each family received packages of dried and fresh fruit, sweets, chicken and beef. The families thanked Rev. Selimian for his care, love and continuous support.





# AMAA's "Syria LifeLine" Relocates 113 Syrian Armenians to the Homeland

In the fall of 2015, the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA), as part of its Syria Relief efforts, established the Syria LifeLine program to help willing individuals and families who are victims of the war in Syria to resettle in Armenia. These families had little or no money. The AMAA provided them with all the financial and logistical assistance for ground transportation to Lebanon and subsequently a flight to the safety of the Homeland. To date, through AMAA's Syria LifeLine, 113 Syrian Armenians have arrived at Zvartnots Airport in Yerevan, where they were welcomed by AMAA-Armenia staff and social workers and escorted to temporary homes and shelters.

#### AMAA's Syria Relief efforts are directed to four areas:

- Aid to those who wish to stay in Syria and need assistance
- In conjunction with Armenian Evangelical churches in the communities, aid to those who have found refuge outside the borders of Syria, such as Lebanon and Canada
- Help to those who are forced to leave Syria and willfully wish to relocate in the Homeland
- Help settle all those who have arrived in the Homeland.

#### AMAA's Relief Programs in Syria provide:

- Food, water, heating and other basic necessities
- Medical assistance
- Educational assistance
- Resettlement in Armenia

#### AMAA's Relief Programs in Armenia provide:

- Temporary housing and rent subsidies
- Medical and Dental assistance
- Provisions
- Infant formula
- Counseling
- Entrepreneurship training and job placement support

To coordinate its relief efforts in Armenia, the AMAA cooperates with the Ministry of Diaspora, the Aleppo Compatriotic Union, the Center for Coordination of SyrArmenians' issues, and the social services departments of the Administrative Districts of the City of Yerevan.

To date, the AMAA has provided over two million dollars for its Syria Relief efforts around the globe. Financial assistance is still needed to ensure our continuous efforts to reach out and help those who are still in Syria and those who are struggling daily to settle in Armenia and re-establish their lives. Your caring gift, no matter how large or small, will help provide much needed relief to these families who have undergone so much suffering and unrest. They are also in need of your daily prayers. ☐



*Distribution of food supplies to needy families in Aleppo.*



*AMAA Staff welcomes Syrian Armenians at Zvartnots Airport.*



*Dental assistance to Syrian Armenian refugees in Armenia.*



# First Armenian Evangelical Church of Montreal Continues Providing Help to Syrian Armenian Refugees

*"The meticulous assembly line operated by 40 volunteers is a miraculous labor of love commissioned by the Lord. The FAEC of Montreal is doing a superb job in assisting Syrian Armenian immigrants to Canada to stand up, get ready and take charge of their lives."* Zaven Khanjian, AMAA Executive Director/CEO.

Since 2015 Syrian Armenian families have arrived in Montreal and the First Armenian Evangelical Church (FAEC) was moved by compassion to help the newly arriving refugees. Many of these families had sojourned in Lebanon waiting for their immigration papers to be approved. By the time they left Lebanon to travel to Canada, much of their savings had been spent and most arrived with less than 1-3 months of living funds.

The needs of the arriving families were and continue to be a great challenge. To date the FAEC has helped more than 1,000 families. This assistance was made possible through the commitment and sacrifice of many members of the Church community who gave generously of their time, to meet the various needs through support programs that were organized. Generous donations from individuals and organizations helped provide for this labor of love, encouraging the FAEC to expand their efforts, as they saw the provision of God and His blessings in the face of an overwhelming need.

The help provided to arriving families has included:

- Welcoming them at the airport, offering moral, spiritual and psychological support and help with integration;
- Providing temporary housing for 1-2 weeks either in the Church facility or at the homes of families of the Church community and helping to find affordable apartments and sometimes assisting with initial months of rent;
- Providing basic furnishings (i.e. appliances, beds, mattresses, tables and chairs) and warm winter clothing (coats, boots and hats).

In addition to these services, in December 2015 a bi-weekly food bank was created which will continue to operate for the foreseeable future. Coordinated and operated by members of FAEC and in partial-partnership with Moisson Montreal (a city run food bank), food boxes are provided to the neediest of the newcomers. Currently there is a roster of 450 families that are registered and every two weeks approximately 250 families are provided with food boxes. Each food box contains non-perishable items as well as Middle Eastern grains, dairy products and sometimes includes meats and vegetables. The food bank requires the mobilization of over 40 volunteers who give 4-10 hours of their time every two weeks.

During the course of 2016, 316 newly arriving families were helped with furniture. A cube van was purchased and a team of volunteers sourced essential furniture, mainly consisting of beds and mattresses, as well as providing



Zaven Khanjian (second from right) with Rev. Georges Dabbo, Pastor of FAEC (first from left) and volunteers.



delivery and installation. Often times the needs the Church faced were overwhelming and seemed unsustainable. However God was faithful to ensure a steady stream of mini-miracles to provide for the needs at hand.

2016 was a record year for ministry to arriving refugee families. In addition to mobilizing a small army of volunteers and



many in-kind contributions, \$85,000 was spent toward running all of the assistance programs. The year started with a deficit of \$10,000 every month and continued for some months in that manner as FAEC was unwilling to stop the work due to the budget. Through one fundraising event and many generous donations, God was faithful and all costs incurred in 2016 have been covered. To God be the glory!

A total of 300 Armenian families are scheduled to arrive in 2017 and the first planes carrying refugees arrived in mid-January. 2017 is a unique year as 20-30 of these families have been sponsored by FAEC and are comprised mainly of families of Armenian Evangelical heritage.

The budget required to provide the planned assistance for 2017 is around \$70,000. In addition, the cube van that was purchased last year is quite old and barely passed road inspection. The Church is concerned that it may break down as every two weeks four tons of food are transported.

Please remember this ministry as the FAEC covets prayers for the following:

- To be able to serve the refugee families in such a manner that the love of God is clearly communicated through the tangible help they receive;
- For God to move in the hearts of the people we minister to causing a revival and many souls finding salvation in Jesus;
- For God to provide for all of the funds and supplies necessary to meet the needs for 2017;
- For a replacement solution for the old cube van.

The FAEC thanks all who step up in prayer and for their help and in so doing have partnered with them in this work. We thank God for the blessings that you made possible through your generosity.

*"I have shown you all things, how that by so laboring ye ought to support the weak and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'"*  
Acts 20:35 □



## Catholicos Aram I Meets with the Armenian Evangelical Community in Aleppo at Bethel Church

**O**n January 7, during his pastoral visit to the city of Aleppo, His Holiness Aram I, Catholicos of the See of Cilicia, visited the Armenian Evangelical Bethel Church and was welcomed by Rev. Haroutune Selimian, President of the Armenian Protestant Community in Syria, pastors of the various Armenian Evangelical Churches, and members of the Church.

Following a special musical program, Rev. Selimian, on behalf of all the Armenian Evangelical Churches, affiliated organizations and institutions, welcomed the Catholicos and expressed his great joy for this special visit. Rev. Selimian honored His Holiness by presenting him with a special plate of appreciation for this historic visit with the Armenian Evangelical Community.

His Holiness addressed the large crowd and emphasized the power of faith and will of the Armenian community in Aleppo. He praised the three religious heads of the Armenian communities for their hard and diligent work helping the community with relief work and helping to rehabilitate the whole community as one spiritual body. As a token of gratitude, he presented Rev. Selimian with a special Armenian cross.

This historic visit concluded with Benediction from His Holiness Aram I. □

# CENTENNIAL CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

## VANADZOR CHURCH

Just north of Yerevan, Vanadzor is the third-largest city in Armenia and the capital of the Lori Province in the northern part of Armenia. After the independence of Armenia, the city was renamed Vanadzor after the Vanadzor River that flows through the city.



### The Needs are Great ...

AMAA's support to Church ministries, hand-in-hand with the Evangelical Church of Armenia (ECA), continues to grow in communities throughout Armenia. As the AMAA began the planning process for the Centennial Campaign, it was decided that the time has come to invest in specific church facility repairs and renovations. Some renovations needed to be addressed immediately and some require additional planning.

As we, at the AMAA remain committed to the ministry God has given us, we want the facilities to reflect our care and concern for the communities served by each Church. The AMAA values a warm and welcoming environment suitable for worship and fellowship where people can learn what it means to follow Jesus and foster a strong relationship with Him. Therefore, in keeping with our value of stewardship of the resources we are blessed with, we have decided to allocate part of the Centennial Campaign for improvements totaling \$1M.

#### **VANADZOR**

Vanadzor is the third largest city of Armenia and the capital of the Lori region in northern Armenia. Vanadzor and its surroundings are rich in archeological monuments. The city has food and light industries, chemical and machine productions. But the big factories which once were a major source of employment are



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## and Our Faith is Strong

out of use. The majority of the inhabitants either works abroad or is busy with retail or agricultural trade.

The Armenian Evangelical Church in Vanadzor was established in 1993. At the time the Church was in a rented space. In those post-earthquake years the people needed social and spiritual programs. As years passed, the programs outgrew the space which was being rented. In 2004, the construction of a new Church in Vanadzor was completed.

The AMAA's Ministry at Vanadzor is very vibrant and diverse: there is a Day Center for 3-6 year olds, and an Educational (Tutorial) Day Center. Nearly 200 children are enrolled in the AMAA Child Sponsorship Program. The Medical mission team visits the church every year, a dental clinic outpost and various cultural and sport groups. Church worship is attended by 200 communicant members and 100 temporary attendees.

The renovation work includes the replacement of the roof, which is leaking and has caused internal damage to both the sanctuary and indoor gymnasium.

Visit AMAA's website ([amaa.org/capital-projects/](http://amaa.org/capital-projects/)) to learn about renovation projects of the churches in Alaverdi, Ijevan and South District of Yerevan.







## Armenian Evangelical Church of Brussels Celebrates 170<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Armenian Evangelical Church

On December 11, the Armenian Evangelical Church of Brussels celebrated the 170th Anniversary of the birth of the Armenian Evangelical Church. The evening was organized in collaboration with the Komitas School with an enthusiastic capacity audience filling the sanctuary. The program was led by Pastor Yura Alexanian and was translated into French by Robert Invijajev.

The program began with the Lord's Prayer *Hayr Mer* sung in Armenian. Letters of congratulations addressed to the Armenian Evangelicals from President Serge Sargsyan, His Holiness Karekin II Catholicos of All Armenians, His Holiness Aram I Catholicos of the Holy Sea of Cilicia and Rev. Dr. Vahan H. Tootikian, Executive Director of the Armenian Evangelical World Council, were read followed by a video presentation about the history and activities of the Armenian Evangelical churches in the Diaspora and Armenia.

The musical portion of the program was provided by Djovava Edmond Edgar (doudouk) and Nelli Ghazaryan (piano) and by the National Orchestra of Belgium, followed by recitations of beautiful Armenian poems by Hamesd Manoukian.

In his closing remarks, Rev. Sarkis Pachaian, Senior Pastor of the Armenian Evangelical Church of Belgium, stressed that the aim of the evening was not to exalt the Armenian Evangelical churches but only God, who is worthy to be exalted and glorified. Recalling the two characteristics of the Armenian Evangelical churches – the importance of the Bible and the need for a personal faith based on the Bible, he said, "One must not only possess the Bible, but must read it. Must not only read it but also obey and follow it. If we do not have a personal faith based on the Bible, no church, including the Armenian Evangelical Church, can save us. The churches are there to show the way of salvation. The Christmas season reminds us that the One Who saves us is the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who came to earth, gave His life on the cross, rose again and will return soon."



*Robert Invijajev and Rev. Sarkis Pachaian address the audience.*

The evening ended with the chanting of doxology for the glory of God, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit. A reception prepared by the young people of the Church followed the program. □



# The Armenian Evangelical Church of Baghdad Continues Its Ministry Despite Turmoil in Iraq

In neighboring Iraq, as the Armenian Evangelical Church of Baghdad was recently celebrating the Birth of the Lord, a series of explosions took place. As chaos reigned outside, inside the Pastor and his congregation decided to stay and finish the service to the end. They thanked the Lord for protection and prayed for comfort of the Holy Spirit for the families who have

lost loved ones in the war which continues to worsen. Terror, bomb explosions, joblessness and economic downfall have engulfed the community.

On behalf of the Pastor, *Badveli* Norek and the committees of our brethren of the Armenian Evangelical Church of Baghdad, we ask for your support and prayers.



*Pastor Norek (left) praying with his congregation.*



*Feeding the children.*

## AMAA Sunday at San Francisco Church

On January 22, Calvary Armenian Congregational Church (CACC) in San Francisco hosted "AMAA Sunday." During the service, Rev. Mgrdich Melkonian, AMAA Field Director/Pastor to Pastors in Armenia, presented various AMAA ministries and gave an overview of AMAA's work around the world. He also preached about the importance of growing as believers and gave practical suggestions on how one can prioritize time with the Lord each day. He emphasized how we not only have to recognize how God has gifted us, but how God wants us to use those gifts to do His work.

After the worship service, a delicious luncheon prepared by the ladies of the church took place. Dr. Matt Silverman, a member of the CACC Missions Committee, welcomed those in attendance and prayed for Rev. Melkonian and the mission of the AMAA on behalf of CACC. The luncheon enabled the congregation to spend more time with Rev. Melkonian learning more about the various ministries and projects of the AMAA. Specifically, Rev. Melkonian spoke about the mission of the AMAA, Syria Relief, and the Centennial Campaign and gave an update about CACC's sister church in Armavir. He then gave the attendees some time for questions and answers. It was very touching to learn of the various ways the AMAA is helping and reaching out to people who are in need in so many places.

In attendance were some of the youngest members of the congregation, the CACC Toddler Sunday School class. During Thanksgiving of 2016 these three-year old children packed and sent clothing and toys for children in Armenia. It was wonderful to see how even young children can help other children and become a part of AMAA's mission. CACC is grateful to God for all the work the AMAA is doing all over the world and grateful that God allows the Church to be part of sharing His love to others. □



*Rev. Mgrdich Melkonian with the CACC Toddler Sunday School Class.*

# Armenian Cilicia Evangelical Church Raises Funds For Families of Martyred Soldiers Defending Borders of Artsakh and Armenia

On Sunday, February 12, on the occasion of Valentine's Day and utilizing Rev. Dr. Vahan H. Tootikian, Executive Director of the Armenian Evangelical World Council's visit, the Mission and Outreach Committee of the Armenian Cilicia Evangelical Church of Pasadena, CA organized a luncheon and cultural program to raise funds for families of soldiers who lost their lives defending the borders of Artsakh and our Homeland, Armenia.

After a spiritual feast during the morning worship service presented by Rev. Dr. Tootikian, over 120 attendees congregated at the Church's Derian Social Hall to enjoy a delicious luncheon sponsored by Vigen Shnorhokian. A short program followed the luncheon and consisted of poems and musical selections on the piano by sister/brother Arpi and Armen Samuelian. They delighted the guests by playing pieces from Aram Khachaturian, Arno Babajanian, Chopin and other famous composers.

Anet Baghdasarian, who was specially invited to participate in the program, shared her story of losing her soldier brother 20 years ago. With tears in her eyes she said how such a tragedy leads to bitterness and disconnects from God. She emphasized the important mission of the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA) reaching out to the families of those who have lost loved ones in the war defending their country, and attending not only their physical needs, but also their spiritual needs. Following



*Rev. Dr. Vahan and Rosette Tootikian (seated at the left) at the Cilicia Church Luncheon.*

Anet's presentation, Nerses Aroyan, who served as the MC, made a special appeal to raise funds for this important mission. Over \$4,000 was raised which will be sent to Armenia through the AMAA, to help the families of these brave soldiers who lost their lives defending our Homeland.

Special thanks to Alice Terian, Chair of the Mission and Outreach Committee, for coordinating the luncheon. □



## First Armenian Presbyterian Church Sunday School Children Help Children in Syria

The Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA) recently received a donation of \$550 from the Sunday School children of the First Armenian Presbyterian Church (FAPC) in Fresno, CA. Each year the Sunday School children select a mission project to invest their prayers, concerns and resources. This past year they selected the children in Syria, who have undergone and continue to experience so much suffering and unrest.

Arpi Keledjian, Sunday School Director, said that the 15 children, ages 5-12, were moved by all the devastation taking place in Syria. Several students were so touched that they emptied their piggy banks on a regular basis. Within a few months, they were able to collect the money to send to the AMAA.

Zaven Khanjian, Executive Director/CEO of the AMAA, thanked the children for their generosity and concern and encouraged them to continue developing a giving heart and to pray for the children and their families in Syria. □





## Meridian School Unveils Plaques For Newly Constructed Bezjian Family Building

On December 9, the C & E Meridian Armenian Evangelical School in Sherman Oaks, CA held a special ceremony to unveil plaques for the newly constructed Bezjian Family Building, as well as for the library, science lab, four classrooms and the coach's office. The ceremony began with a blessing offered by Rev. Hendrick Shanazarian.

Following the plaque unveiling ceremony, guests attended the Board of Directors' annual Christmas party and appreciation dinner held in the School's Aram and Anahis D. Boolghoorjian Hall. Following the invocation by Minister to the Union Rev. Berdj Djambazian, guests were treated to a delicious dinner and a delightful musical performance by Nectarine Chilyan, who sang and played the Kanon. The evening's celebrations were concluded with singing of Christmas carols led by Rev. Vatche and Lena Ekmekjian.

Construction of the new building was made possible by a generous donation from benefactors Albert and Terry Bezjian. The library was named in loving memory of Dr. Hrair and Katie Atikian. Dr. Atikian served the School for many years in the capacity of Board member and Chairman. The TF Educational Foundation sponsored the science lab. Dr. Misak and Hourig Abdulian sponsored a classroom in loving memory of sisters Araxie and Mary Abdulian. Marie-Louise, Gilbert and Robert Meneshian sponsored a classroom in loving memory of their parents Avedis and Nora Meneshian.



*Meridian School Benefactors Albert and Terry Bezjian.*

Other classroom sponsors were Dr. Daniel and Juliette Abdulian and Drs. Nazareth and Ani Darakjian. The athletic coach's office was sponsored by Dr. Vahe and Seta Nalbandian.

We thank our benefactors and generous sponsors. For information on other rooms available for sponsorship, please call Dr. Ivan Shnorhokian at (412)759-2020 or Dr. Vahe Nalbandian at (818)507-9848. □

## Rev. Dr. Vahan Tootikian, Executive Director of AEWCC, Visits Meridian School on Vartanants Day

On February 23, Rev. Dr. Vahan H. Tootikian, Executive Director of the Armenian Evangelical World Council (AEWCC), visited the Charlotte and Elise Meridian Armenian Evangelical School in Sherman Oaks, CA to commemorate St. Vartanants Day with the students and faculty. Many parents as well as some Board members were also in attendance.

The Second Grade students prepared a special program of songs, recitations, a dance and a play which depicted an

imaginary encounter between the students and Zoravar Vartan Mamigonian.

Rev. Dr. Tootikian delivered an interesting and informative message to the students. He narrated the events that led to the battle of Avarayr and explained the important role that it played in preserving the Armenian nation and its Christian faith. He engaged the students by asking them questions about their Christian faith and the events of Vartanants. He was impressed with the knowledge exhibited by the students. □





# Spreading Good News

*"Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it."* **Proverbs 22:6**

Immediately after the devastating 1988 earthquake in Armenia, the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA) initiated and supported various relief programs in Armenia, providing basic necessities to many people, including orphans and needy children. Today, through the Orphan and Child Care Sponsorship Program, the AMAA reaches out to over 2,800 needy children in Armenia and Karabagh.

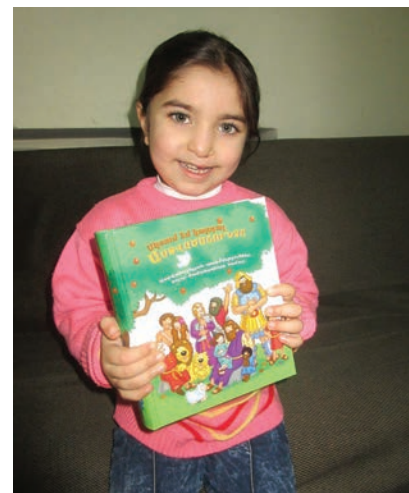
Children are matched with a sponsor who receives photographs of the child and information about their circumstances and families. Throughout the year, these children are visited by AMAA social workers. The cost of sponsoring a child in Armenia is \$300 per year, which is given directly to the sponsored child's guardian on a quarterly basis (\$75 per quarter). The AMAA absorbs the administrative costs associated with this program to ensure that the entire sponsored amount is provided to the child.

In January, the AMAA's Sponsorship Department in Armenia began giving Children's Bibles to each newly-sponsored child. There are two versions of the Bible, depending on the age group.

The Bibles have created a lot of excitement among the children. After giving a Bible to the child, the social worker explains

that it is important to read it every day, and if they are too young or don't yet know how to read, to ask their parents to read it to them. This is part of the AMAA's commitment to continue providing resources to help 'train up a child in the way he should go' (Proverbs 22:6) and '... to take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God' (Ephesians 6:17).

The Children's Bible is written in several languages. The Armenian version was published in 2016 by the Bible Society in Armenia. The Bible Society in Armenia is just one of 100 branches of the United Bible Society which serves over 200 countries around the world representing all Christians – Orthodox, Catholic and Protestant. □



## Armenian Evangelical P. & E. Torosian School Kindergarten Playground Opening

By Seta Karagoezian\*

The Armenian Missionary Association of Australia (AMA-Australia) made it possible to renovate the Kindergarten playground at the Armenian Evangelical P. & E. Torosian School in Nor Amanos (Dora District), Bourdj Hamoud, Lebanon. The donation from AMA-Australia was made in loving memory of Vartan Sarmazian, with the generous donation of his family and friends. Mr. Sarmazian's daughter, Datevig Sarmazian-Youmshajekian, served for many years as Director of the Kindergarten before she migrated to Australia in 1993.

This restoration not only brought joy to the Kindergarten students but the rubber tiling, which replaced the concrete and the replacement of iron-made toys with rubber ones, added to the safety of the children during playtime.

The opening ceremony was held on Sunday, January 22 and attended by Rev. Dr. Krikor Youmshajekian, President of AMA-Australia, Rob Floyd, National Director of the UnitingWorld – Uniting Church in Australia, Rev. Megrditch Karagoezian, President of the Union of the Armenian Evangelical Churches in the Near East, Badveli Sevag Trashian, Pastor of the Armenian Evangelical Emmanuel Church of Nor Amanos, and the School Board, teachers, staff, students and parents. Rev. Dr. Youmshajekian and Mr. Floyd



were part of the Uniting Church in Australia and the Middle East National Conference official delegation visiting Lebanon to establish partnership with the Evangelical brothers and sisters in the mission of God and also to remind each other that there is hope in the darkness. □

*\*Seta Karagoezian is the Principal of the Armenian Evangelical P. & E. Torosian School.*







## Official Delegation of Uniting Church in Australia Visits Lebanon

**A**n official delegation of the Uniting Church in Australia (UCA), accompanied by Rev. Dr. Krikor Youmshajekian, President of the Armenian Missionary Association of Australia (AMA-Australia) and a member of the recently formed UCA Middle East National Conference (UCA-MENC), paid an official visit to Lebanon from January 16-23.

Along with Rev. Dr. Youmshajekian, the delegation included the President of UCA Assembly Stuart McMillan, National Director of the UnitingWorld Rob Floyd, and from the UCA-MENC Rev. Gaby Kobrossi Minister of Banckstown District Uniting Church and Rev. Dr. Emmanuel Adisho, Multicultural Ministry Consultant Western Australia Synod. The full and exhausting itinerary was put together by Rev. Dr. Paul Hadosian, Chairman of the Central Committee of the Union of the Armenian Evangelical Churches in the Near East (UAECNE) and the President of Haigazian University.

The delegation met with Evangelical Church leaders, including the Union of the UAECNE, His Holiness Catholicos Aram I of the Holy See of Cilicia, main stream Evangelical denominations and institutions such as Haigazian University and the Near East School of Theology, leaders of the Maronite, Syriac Orthodox, Roman Orthodox, Middle East Council of Churches, Supreme Council of the Evangelical Churches in Syria and Lebanon and the Fellowship of Middle East Evangelical Churches. They expressed their solidarity with the suffering people of the Middle East and talked about establishing a partnership with brothers and sisters in God's mission field. Highlights of the trip were the protocol visits with the newly-elected Lebanese President General Michel Aoun, who warmly welcomed the delegation, and the special welcome reception of the Australian Ambassador the Honourable Glenn Miles at his residence.



*Stuart McMillan presents a plaque to General Michel Aoun, President of Republic of Lebanon.*

After the visit the delegation met with representatives of the UAECNE, the National Evangelical Church and the Synod of the Presbyterian Churches in Syria and Lebanon to look into possible avenues to establish a partnership and provide moral and financial support, mutual participation in programs, seminars on different levels, student exchange programs, and pastoral sabbatical exchanges.

The Uniting Church leadership was pleased with the trip and thankful to hear and listen to the stories of brothers and sisters in Christ. They returned to Australia feeling very impressed and satisfied. □





Rev. Dr. René Leonian and Rakel Dink.

## 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Commemoration of Hrant Dink's Assassination in Istanbul

On January 19, thousands of people gathered in the Sisly neighborhood of Istanbul to commemorate the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the assassination of Hrant Dink, founder and Editor of Agos Newspaper. Holding slogans in Turkish and Armenian, the people chanted "We are all Hrant Dink" to express their pain and their struggle for truth and justice. Many prominent figures and intellectuals joined the crowd, including Turks, Armenians, Kurds and Alevis.

The main speech was delivered by Rakel Dink, Hrant's widow. She thanked all those who were present and all those who continue working to make the truth known. During her speech, Rakel said she regretted that the Turkish authorities have still not arrested the sponsors of her husband's murder and she found it strange that these same authorities constantly present new culprits. Referring to the Bible and Christian values, she recalled the importance of life and the beauty of love.

Rev. Dr. René Leonian, President of the Union of the Armenian Evangelical Churches of Eurasia, an old friend of Hrant Dink, was among the crowd who later visited Rakel Dink and her family and reminisced about their past friendship. □



## Remembering and Honoring the Armenian Genocide of 1915

### A Recital by Arnold Gregorian to Benefit AMAA's Syria Relief Fund

Remembering and Honoring the Armenian Genocide of 1915 was the theme of a recital by Arnold Gregorian, double bass, and Lucy Faridany, piano, at Peace United Church in Santa Cruz, CA on Sunday, November 1.

Featuring music by primarily Armenian composers, the duo began the concert with the Sonata Op. 17 by Beethoven, in Gregorian's own arrangement for bass and piano. From the beginning of the Beethoven Sonata, pianist Lucy Faridany very skillfully moderated the balance, allowing the bass to be clearly heard while never sacrificing important passages on the piano.

The program also included three songs from Komitas Vartapet (1865-1935) in Gregorian's skillful and effective transcription. In the first song, the piano accompaniment resembled the Armenian kanun, an ancient dulcimer plucked with picks. In a following section, the bass had tremolo bowing, rapid and short strokes that also mimic the kana. The melodies heard in much of the program reflected traditional Armenian scale structure.

A Lullaby by Alexander Arutiunian (1920-2012) with piano reflected the melodic style of Komitas. An Armenian Dance by Artemi Ayvazyan (1902-1975) was more lively and folk-like in the manner of Bartok. The very prolific American-Armenian composer Alan Hovhaness (1911-2000) was represented by a Fantasy for bass and piano. Gregorian said that he first met Hovhaness at the Cabrillo Music Festival in 1981. The composer was a guest that year while Gregorian was a member of the Festival Orchestra. Much of this composer's music reflects his national background.

As an encore, the duo performed *Impromptu* by Arutiunian, a lively and engaging work.

Donations collected at the concert supported the efforts of the Armenian Missionary Association of America, focusing on the Armenian community in Syria.

(Source: Remembering and Honoring the Armenian Genocide of 1915 by Rogers Emanuels, Nov. 2, 2015, *Peninsula Reviews*)





# The Armenian American Museum Unveils Concept Design for Downtown Glendale Site



**T**he Armenian American Museum and Cultural Center (AAM) unveiled the concept design of a Museum, which will be located near the Central Library in downtown Glendale, CA, at a gathering of more than 400 community members at the Brandview Ballroom on December 8.

The AAM's mission is to promote understanding and appreciation of America's ethnic and cultural diversity by sharing the Armenian American experience. When completed, it will serve as a cultural campus that enriches the community, educates the public on the Armenian American story, and empowers individuals to embrace cultural diversity and speak out against prejudice.

The governing board of the Armenian American Museum consists of representatives from the following ten Armenian American institutions and organizations: Armenian Catholic Eparchy, Armenian Cultural Foundation, Armenian Evangelical Union of North America, Armenian General Benevolent Union – Western District, Armenian Missionary Association of America, Armenian Relief Society – Western USA, Nor Or Charitable Foundation, Nor Serount Cultural Association, Western Diocese of the Armenian Church of North America, and Western Prelacy of the Armenian Apostolic Church.

The Museum envisions an iconic design that will depict the rock formations and mountain range found in Armenia. Alajajian-Marcoosi Architects described the design as also capturing the sensation one gets from the San Gabriel Mountains rising to the north of Glendale. Over the next two months, the Armenian American Museum will implement its outreach efforts to obtain feedback about the concept design.

In March of 2016, the Glendale City Council recommended that the Armenian American Museum consider locating the Museum and Cultural Center to the Central Park Block Project area in the heart of Glendale. An Exclusive Negotiating Agreement was executed by the City and the AAM Governing Board in the summer to initiate the process for conducting feasibility studies,

developing concept designs, and negotiating ground lease and development agreements.

The City of Glendale and the AAM are scheduled to complete the concept design, traffic, parking, economic, and environmental studies in time for consideration of the ground lease agreement by the City Council during the first quarter of 2017.

The Central Park Block Project envisions the construction of a new downtown public parking structure and repurposing the parking lots located to the south and east of the Central Library to recreational uses. The concept design calls for constructing a museum and cultural center on top of the subterranean garage.

The unveiled concept design demonstrates how the exhibit galleries, halls, theater, research facilities, learning center, demonstration kitchen, and archive space will connect to each other and the outdoor covered plaza. City officials and community organizers believe the synergy between the Armenian American Museum and the neighboring Central Library, Museum of Neon Arts, and Americana at Brand could make the downtown area an extremely appealing location for the City's residents and tourists. □





# Dr. Zaven Messerlian's 4 Volumes of Modern Armenian History Translated from Armenian to English

It is a sad fact that some three-quarters of Armenians who live in the Diaspora and the newer generations do not have a full grasp of their language. Hence, they are unable to research Armenian archives and studies in their quest to attain an in-depth knowledge of their history. So, to reach more Armenians, there's a need to translate Armenian works mainly into English.

With this in mind, we believe that the recent publication in English of four of Dr. Zaven Messerlian's previously published Armenian volumes fills that need. The volumes are:

**1. Before and After the Armenian Genocide** – The enormous impact of the Armenian Genocide on the Armenian psyche and identity has necessitated its multi-disciplinary research. The 301-page book is a compilation of 17 articles written over a span of almost four decades. The emphasis is on the Armenian population statistics from the period immediately preceding the Genocide to the onset of the 21st century. Some of the other issues covered include Ottoman culpability and denial of the Armenian Genocide, foreign intervention in support of Armenians, such as the joint declaration of the Allies in May 1915 and the letters of Pope Benedictus XV, and Ottoman archives, including the "Black Notebook" of Talaat Pasha.

**2. Three Treaties (Alexandropol, Moscow and Kars, 1920-1921)** – The 190-page book analyzes the impact of the three treaties on the evolution of the Armenian Question, the exploitation of the Armenian Case by the great powers and the effect these treaties had on the formation of the boundaries of modern-day Armenia. Although not included in the title, several other conferences and treaties, such as the Treaties of San Stefano and Berlin (1878), the Treaty of Batum (1918), the conference of London and the Treaty of Sevres, both in 1920, are also discussed to provide a bigger picture of the developments of the time. The articles of the three treaties and that of Sevres are included in the addendum.

**3. The Evolution of the Armenian Question (1939-2010)** – The book covers the evolution of the Armenian Question from the onset of WWII in 1939 till the infamous Protocols of 2009. Taking this timeline into consideration, when Armenia was one of the republics of the Soviet Union (till 1991), the process of evolution is mostly correlated to the foreign policy of the Soviet Union, one of the two major powers of the world. Thus, the claim for Kars and Ardahan (1945), the Truman Doctrine (1947), the ebb and flow of Soviet-Turkish relations and their impact on Armenia have to be viewed under this prism. Parallel to this viewpoint, the book covers actions initiated by the Armenian Diaspora, such as the armed struggle movement (1975-1990) and the ongoing Genocide Recognition campaign (since 1978). With the establishment of the Republic of Armenia in 1991 and the struggle for the liberation of Artsakh, the evolution process enters a new phase. A new path is shaping up in Armenian-Turkish relations, with the involvement of intellectu-

als on both sides, in addition to the role played by major powers, as evidenced by the infamous Protocols of 2009. The 362-page book includes 787 notations, and contains a wealth of essential information on

how to move forward our relations with Turkey and major powers.

**4. Foreign Policy of USA and the Armenian Question (1900-2010)** – If we had to combine the immediately above mentioned two books (#2 and #3) under one title, "Foreign Policy of USA and the Armenian Question" would have fit the bill. Bearing in mind that the two major powers of the 20th century were the US and USSR, this volume completes the picture of depicting the evolution of the Armenian Question vis-à-vis the major powers and the lessons Armenians can derive from it. Over the 157 pages of the book, we witness how the Armenian Question was treated by successive US presidents (Woodrow Wilson to Barack Obama). Regrettably, time and again we see a great deal of supportive declarations with relatively no practical achievement, even after Armenia became an independent republic, free of Soviet rule.

Dr. Zaven Messerlian received his M.A. in European history from the American University of Beirut in 1959 and an honorary doctorate in Armenology in 2003 by the National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Armenia. He has authored 9 books and over 100 Armenological studies and articles. He was one of the few Armenians instrumental in mentioning the Armenian Genocide as the first genocide of the 20th century in the 30th paragraph of a UN report in 1973. His discovery in 1979 of a confidential 1948 UN report about the War Criminals of WWII was used in securing the UN recognition of the Armenian Genocide in 1985. Dr. Messerlian has been the Principal of the Armenian Evangelical College of Beirut since July 1967. He has received many awards, including the medal of St. Mesrob Mashdots from Aram I the Catholicos of the Great House of Cilicia and the medal of St. Sahag and St. Mesrob from Karekin II the Catholicos and Supreme Patriarch of All Armenians.

The four volumes were translated from Armenian into English by Maral O. Sarkissian-Kaloustian of Beirut and the translation and publication of the books were funded by philanthropist Raffy Manoukian of London. **To obtain copies of these books, please contact Abril Bookstore of Glendale, California, AGBU Bookstore in New York or directly from the author.**



(Orig. posted on *Massis Post*, by Harut Der-Tavitian)



# Rev. Dr. Vahan Tootikian's Latest Book, *Experiences*

By Mihran Jizmejian, President, AMAC

In the early days of the New Year 2017, the Armenian Heritage Committee of the Armenian Congregational Church of Greater Detroit published the 39<sup>th</sup> bilingual book entitled "*Experiences/Portzaroootyunner*," authored by the veteran, senior pastor, well-known intellectual and educator, Rev. Dr. Vahan H. Tootikian.

The book is composed of 160 pages with 31 articles in English and 15 in the Armenian languages. In this bilingual collection of concise, focused and inspirational articles and essays, the author imparts insights gathered over the years through his personal and professional experiences that will enrich the faith of his readers with authentic illustrations, Scriptural examples and reflective questions.

Once again, Rev. Dr. Tootikian has demonstrated that, as an acute observer and a good communicator, he has a special talent of being a spokesman for God's word, a gift he has generously shared with the reading public.

In this wonderfully-written book the author deals with a variety of subjects, such as religious, educational, social, ethical and ethnic issues, as well as dealing with such subjects as nature, national observances and religious feast and festivals.

The author has dedicated his 39<sup>th</sup> book, "*Experiences*," to the Armenian Congregational Church of Greater Detroit, where he served as the Senior Pastor for over 30 years (1975-2005), and since then serving as Minister Emeritus.

Our personal experiences become our best teachers if we can learn from them. Based on his experiences, the author provides

practical and logical suggestions in this volume. Writing in an accessible, impeccable and engaging style, he tackles with the questions of "What," "Why," "How," and "When." His strong faith for Christian principles and unconditional love toward his Armenian culture are very apparent in his writings. His readers, especially those who know him personally, cannot miss seeing in him the model Armenian clergyman and the true Armenian patriot.

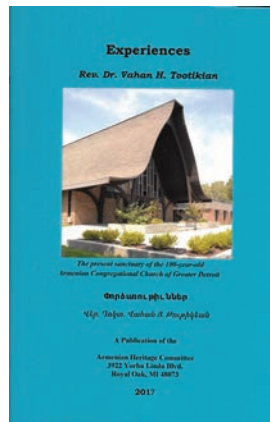
Rev. Dr. Tootikian strongly believes that one cannot separate the Armenian Christian from his culture. Both Christianity and culture go parallel, guaranteeing the survival of the Armenian nationhood. He also believes strongly that the preservation of the Armenian heritage and defending the Armenian Cause are inseparable and complement each other.

A widely recognized and distinguished Armenian scholar, Rev. Dr. Tootikian writes with warmth, clarity and eloquence. Both in the English and Armenian sections of the book, his essays are compact, lucid and

inspirational.

On the publication of his 39<sup>th</sup> book, I congratulate Rev. Dr. Tootikian for his untiring endeavor and perseverance in using his writing ability and talent, among other qualities, all dedicated to the glory of God and to his fellow humans.

I highly recommend this book to the reading public. **The price of the book with shipping and handling is \$28.50 and may be ordered from: Armenian Heritage Committee, 3922 Yorba Linda Blvd., Royal Oak, MI 48073-6455. □**



## Meet Our Staff at AMAA

### Sonia Avakian, Database Supervisor

In August 2015, Sonia Avakian joined the AMAA as Database Supervisor. She is honored and grateful to be serving the Association in this capacity. Sonia is extremely focused and meticulous in regards to managing the AMAA database in addition to supporting other office functions.

Prior to joining the AMAA, Sonia held various positions while working at the northeast headquarters of AT&T Mobility for over 23 years. She holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Business Administration and has been actively involved in her local community volunteering for Habitat for Humanity, Samaritan's Purse, Literacy Volunteers of America and Girl Scouts of NJ.

She is a long-time resident of Paramus, NJ and she and her husband Steven have two teenagers, Steven and Sabrina. Sonia's family attends Bethany Church in Washington Township, NJ where she serves on the hospitality committee and is involved in multiple women's ministries. Her favorite scripture is Psalm 91, encompassing all of God's promises.



# Ուրիշ ելք չկա՛յ

Չաւէն Խանճեան

**Տ**արեգլուխ է կրկին: Մարդկային կեանքի եւ պատմութեան անիւի հոլովոյթով, անհատապէս եւ ազգովին տարի մը եւս բոլորած ըլլալու խոկումի եւ խորհրդածութեան հայելիին առջեւ կը գտնուինք: Հետեւաբար անյարիր չէ մտքերը հրապարակաւ արտայայտել: Զննարկման անհրաժեշտութեան հրամայականը մտքի մարզանք չէ այլ յենած տարուայ մը եւս փորձառութեան վրայ, ազգային ուղեւորութեան ճանապարհին յարկ եղած բարեփոխումներու ձգտումին գիտակցութիւնն է:

Աշխարհագրականօրէն Հայ ժողովուրդի պատմութեան այս հանգրուանին ծանօթ երեք յենարաններն են՝ Հայաստանի Հանրապետութիւնը, Արցախի Հանրապետութիւնը եւ տարաշխարհով տարտղնուած Սփիւռքահայութիւնը:

Ահաւասիկ համառօտ ակնարկ մը սոյն յենարաններուն:

**Ա.** 2016ը Հայաստանի երրորդ հանրապետութեան անկախութեան քսանհինգամեակն էր: Պատշաճօրէն՝ հայրենիքի եւ սփիւռքի տարածքին տպաւորիչ գինւորական տողանցքով եւ բազմաթիւ փայլուն հանդիսութիւններով յիշատակուեցաւ պատմականօրէն մանուկ այս հանրապետութեան տարեդարձը: Սեպտեմբեր 21ի երեկոյան Երեւանի մարզահամալիրի փառաւոր հանդիսութեան, ՀՀ Նախագահի արտասանած խօսքը անզուգական նկարագրութիւն մըն էր այն իտեալ հայրենիքին զոր բոլորս կը բաղձանք: Հայաստանի քաղաքացիին իրաւունքներու եւ ազատութիւններու նկարագրութիւնը մարմին փշաքաղող դասագրքային շարահիւսութիւն էր: Իրականացնելու համար ժողովրդավար եւ զարգացած երկրի մը մէջ անհրաժեշտութիւն եղողը նկերային արդարութիւնը եւ տնտեսական բարեկեցութիւնը, կը մնայ հաւաքական ջանքերով եւ պահանջներով իրականացնել բոլոր այդ գեղեցիկ իրաւունքներու կիրարկումը երկրին մէջ: Երկրի նոր վարչապետը այդ իրաւունքներու ցանկէն անպայման օրինակ մը ունենալու է իր

գրասեղանին վրայ: Քաղաքացին, պայքարելու եւ պահանջելու հարկանդրանքին տակ գտնուելու չէ վայելելու համար սահմանադրականօրէն իրը եղող որեւէ իրաւունք: Հայրենիքի պաշտպանութեան համար սահմանները հսկող եւ կամ իր արիւնը յեղող քաղաքացին տէր է այդ իրաւունքին: Նմանապէս իր հարկերը կանոնաւորապէս վճառող քաղաքացիին բնական իրաւունքն է հեզասահ կերպով վայելել մարդկային իրաւունքներու գեղեցիկ փունջը զոր երկրի սահմանադրութիւնը ապահոված է: Այս իրաւունքներու ծիրին մէջ է նաեւ օրէնքի արդար եւ հաւասար կիրարկումը բոլոր քաղաքացիներու վրայ առանց խտրականութեան զոր կաշառակերութեան, փտածութեան եւ ինքնահարստացման դէմ պայքարի առաջնահերթ միջոցն է:

Հայրենիքի հողին վրայ գտնուող ամենաթանկագին հարստութիւնը երկրի քաղաքացին է: Անոր գոհունակութիւնը, պատիւն ու արժանապատուութիւնը երաշխիքն է հայրենիքի յարատեւութեան, գոյութեան եւ զարգացման: Պետութեան կողքին, հզօր հայրենիքի մը ապահով սահմաններուն մէջ գոհունակ քաղաքացիութեան մը ապահովումը նաեւ իմ եւ քու պարտաւորութիւնն է, մեր հաւաքական յանձնառութիւնը եւ աշխատանքը զոր մեզմէ կը պահանջուի առանց պայմանի, առեւտուրի կամ վարձատրութեան:

Ուրիշ ելք չկա՛յ:

**Բ.** 2016ին Արցախի Հանրապետութիւնը եւս յիշատակեց իր անկախութեան քսանհինգամեակը: Հակառակ տօնախմբութեան մթնոլորտին եւ ոգիին, Արցախը՝ Ապրիլեան քառօրեայ պատերազմի փորձառութեամբ նորոգուած ցաւով կը մնայ խոցելի: Արեւելեան ճակատի ոսոխին անակնկալ եւ վայրագ յարձակումին պատճառած աղետը երկար դարմանումի կարօտ է: Ամենափոքր վնասն է մէկ զոհն իսկ շատ է մեզի համար: Համահայկական ընդօստ նեցուկը թէեւ միախարական է, սակայն թշնամիին նենգ եւ դաւադիր դիրքը կը մնայ լուրջ



սպառնալիք: Արցախը մեր անսակարկելի ճակատն է, արժանի ամեն զոհողության եւ նեցուկի: Արցախը մեր Աւարայրն ու Սարտարապատն է: Արցախեան ճակատը, Հայաստանի գոյության, հզօրության եւ գերիշխանության գրաւականն է, անսասան թումբը եւ անխախտելի գիծը: Մեր բոլորին բնական եւ տրամաբանական ակնկալութիւնն է որ Պետութիւն եւ իշխանութիւն ի Հայաստան եւ Արցախ պետք եղած բարեփոխութիւնները կատարելագործած ըլլան Ապրիլեան ճակատումի որպէս արդիւնք ի յայտ եկած եւ սերտուած բացթողումներու փորձառութենէն:

Գիտակից ենք թէ վերջերս Արցախեան տագնապը լուծելու փորձերը աշխուժացած իսկ ճնշումները հայկական կողմին վրայ ուժեղացած են: Ճշմարիտ է նաեւ թէ սերունդներ շարունակ պատերազմի սպառնալիքին տակ պահելը անբաղձալի է: Այդ վիճակը կրնայ ժողովուրդի մը ստեղծագործելու եւ արդիւնաբերելու կարողականութիւնը ջլատել իսկ անոր Աստուածատուր խաղաղ եւ արժանավայել կեանք մը ապրելու արդար իրաւունքը զլանալ: Ամեն սակարկութիւն սակայն եւ ակնկալուած զիջում ազգային ռազմագիտական անկիւնէ սահմանուած գին մը ունի որը կարելի չէ խախտել: Մեր երկրի ղեկավարները պարտին գիտնալ զոհողության եւ զիջումի այդ սահմանը եւ այդ գիտակցութեամբ մտնեն բանակցութեան տաղաւարը: Խաղաղութեան ճանապարհը սուրբ է եւ փշոտ: Հարկ է սրբութեամբ մօտենալ այդ ճանապարհին վրայ մեր կարողականութեան համոզումին եւ կարելիութիւններու եւ միջոցարումներու ինքնավստահութեան: Արցախեան ազատագրութեան ճանապարհը որոգուած է նահատակ ազատամարտիկներու արիւնով, որեւէ լուծում այդ զոհողության արդար գինը նժարի վրայ դնելու է:

Հաւաքաբար պատրաստ պետք է ըլլանք տագնապի լուծման արդար գինը պարտադրող լուծումին: Ուրիշ ելք չկայ:

**9.** Սփիւռքահայութեան կազմաւորման, հաւաքական կարողականութեան, հայապահապանումի, ֆիզիքական գոյութեան պայքարի, ստեղծուած նոր գաղութներու, լեզուի եւ մշակոյթի պահպանումի, հայրենիքի եւ Արցախի նկատմամբ նուիրագործուած միաձոյլ ճակատ մը կազմելու եւ այլ մտահոգութիւններու տուն տուող հարցերը բազմաթիւ են: Թաւալող տագնապներ՝ որոնք կը ժառանգուին սերունդէ սերունդ:

Հինգ տարի է սակայն որ հայ ժողովուրդը կ'ապրի եւ կը դիմագրաւէ Սփիւռքահայութեան արմատները խախտող եւ գոյութեան սպառնացող յետ Եղեռնեան ամենամեծ Ազգային Աղետը:

Սուրիահայութեան տագնապին, Սփիւռքահայ Մայր Գաղութի անդամահատումին եւ Սուրիահայ հոծ գաղթականներու անյոյս եւ անմխիթար վիճակին՝ մենք հաւանաբար հարկ եղած լրջութեամբ չմօտեցանք: Այո՝ գոյութիւն քաջքնող սնունդ մը կարողացանք հայթայթել կրակի տակ գտնուողներուն: Գորովագին օժանդակութեամբ թեթեւցուցինք Հայրենիք ապաստան գտնող անկողմնացոյց գաղթականներու ցաւը: Սակայն չկրցանք մեծ պատկերը տեսնել եւ գաղութի քայքայումէն փխած նուազագոյն օգուտը քաղել: Որովհետեւ՝ Սուրիահայութեան տագնապէն փխած բոլոր չարիքներուն դիմաց միայն մէկ մխիթարութիւն եւ ազգային շահ կրնայ ըլլալ՝ անոնց հայրենիք հաստատուիլը եւ հայրենիքը մարդուժով, տաղանդով, մասնագիտութեամբ եւ կարողականութեամբ հարստացնելը: Սուրիան եւ Սուրիահայութիւնը, փրկութեան կարօտ ոգեղէն Արեւմտահայաստանն է եւ մենք երբ որոշեցինք պատմութեան կորսուած էջերուն յանձնել Արեւմտահայաստանը:

Վտանգի նուազումի եւ յարաբերական ապահովութեան վերադարձի մշուշոտ յոյսեր կ'երեւան Սուրիական հորիզոնի վրայ: Հալէպը մանաւանդ, ազատագրուելու վերջին հանգրուանի վրայ ըլլալ կը թուի: Մենք երախտապարտ ենք Սուրիական հայրենիքին՝ որ դար մը շարունակ ապահով ապաստան եւ հովանի պարգեւեց առաջին ցեղասպանութենէն փրկուած հայու բեկորներուն եւ այդ բեկորները իրենց կարգին, երկրագունդի վրայ արտակարգօրէն ծաւալած Սփիւռքահայութեան զարթօնքի աւիշն ու արիւնը հանդիսացան:

Այսօր այդ գաղութի զաւակներէն ոմանք, հաւատարիմ նոր հայրենիքին, հաստատ եւ գիտակից կերպով թերեւս փափաքին շարունակել իրենց կեանքը, վերջ ի վերջոյ օր մը, խելայեղօրէն զարգացումի, վերաշինութեան եւ վերականգնումի ենթակայ ծննդավայրի մը մէջ: Եւ մենք, յարգելով անոնց կամքն ու որոշումը, մղուած մարդկային եւ ազգային պարտաւորութիւններէ, պարտինք սատարել անոնց վերականգնումին: Ժողովուրդի մը կեանքին մէջ սակայն, միջանի սերունդի բաժանումով անկողմնացոյց երկու բռնագաղթ անկրկնելի մնալու է եւ ուրեմն հարկ է հաւաքուիլ հարազատ հողամասի մը վրայ ուր աւելի տրամաբանօրէն ապահովելի է աղետի անկրկնելիութիւնը:

Հայ Սփիւռքը ընդհանրապէս եւ Սուրիահայ Սփիւռքը յատկապէս հարկ է հաւաքել ապահով, հիւրընկալ եւ գուրգուրալից հայրենիքի մը հողին վրայ:

Ուրիշ ելք չկայ:

## Հրանդ Տինքի Վկայութիւնը Տրուած Լոս Անճելըսի Հայ Աւետարանական Միացեալ Եկեղեցիին Մէջ՝ 5 Նոյեմբեր 2006-ին



Նախ կը բարեւեմ ձեզ, եւ շնորհակալութիւն կը յայտնեմ որ այս առիթը տրուեցաւ ինծի՝ այս եկեղեցին այցելել, եւ մի քանի վայրկեան իսկ ձեզի հետ խօսիլ: Ըսեմ որ Աւետարանական եկեղեցիին բնաւ անծանօթ մէկը չեմ, քանի որ մեծցած եմ Աւետարանական եկեղեցիին ծոցին մէջ, Իսթանպուլի Կեսիկ Փաշայի Հայ Աւետարանական մանկանց բոյնին մէջ, որ այդ ժամանակ կը կառավարուէր Պարոն Հրանդ Կիւզէլեանի կողմէ: Նամանաւանդ Աւետարանական շարժումը այդ ժամանակ սկսած էր Անատոլիւն. կորսուած ընտանիքներու զաւակները գտնել եւ Պոլիս բերել, եւ հոն՝ դպրոցներու մէջ՝ անոնք հայ մշակոյթով մեծցնելու ջանք թափել: Եւ ես՝ երեք եղբայրներով՝ Մալաթիայէն եկանք Իսթանպուլ, եւ մտանք Կեսիկ Փաշայի Հայ Աւետարանական եկեղեցին. ես եօթը տարեկան էի, իմ պզտիկ եղբայրներս՝ մէկը հինգ, իսկ միւսը երեք տարեկան:

Սա վկայութիւնը կ'ուզեմ պարզապէս ընել որ կեանքիս մէջ որքան դեր ունեցած է Աւետարանական եկեղեցին եւ անոր հոգին, անոր ներշնչումը: Հոն ճանչցայ բաւական լուրջ պատուելիներ, որ ձեզի անծանօթ չեն, ինչպէս Վեր. Սաղըրեանը, Վեր. Սահակեանը, Վեր. Պազգալեանը, եւ նամանաւանդ Վեր. Պազգալեանը, որ ձեզի համար նոյն ատեն մեծ պապիկ մըն էր. ամէն տարի Յրանսայէն կու գար եւ մէկ ամիս մեր մէջ կը գործէր: Իր այդ սիրուն ոգով ձեզի Ս. Գիրքը կը ներշնչէր: Շատ բան շահեցայ Աւետարանական եկեղեցիին մէջ, որ այսօր՝ կեանքիս մէջ ալ կը գործածեմ:

Երբ եկանք Անատոլիւն, այդ ժամանակ Պարոն Հրանդ Կիւզէլեանը, որովհետեւ ամառները կը վերադառնային Անատոլիւն ու կը մոռնային ինչ որ կը սորվէինք՝ հայերէնը, փափաքեցաւ որ ամառուան քամի մը ընել եւ տղաքը ետ անատոլիւն չորկել: Թուրքիայի մէջ քամի մը հիմնեցինք, պարապ արտ մըն էր այդ մէկը, առիթ այդ արտը, եւ մենք՝ տղաք, վրաններու տակ պառկելով, ամէն ամառ հոն երթալով, տարիներով աշխատեցանք ծառեր տնկեցինք, հորեր փորեցինք, շէնք շինեցինք եւ խոշոր դրախտ մը շինեցինք վերջապէս: Ես հոն մեծցայ, եւ իմ տիկինս, որ ինքն ալ Մարտինէն եկած, քրտացած հայերէն մէկն էր, ան ալ հոն՝ ինը տարեկանին, ես՝ տասնչորս տարեկանիս, միասին իրար ճանչցանք՝ հոն մեծցանք, հոն ամուսնացանք, եւ հոն զաւակներ ունեցանք, այդ քնքիւն մէջ, եւ այսպէս հասանք մինչեւ 1980 թուականները, 1960-ին շինուած եւ 20-25 տարիներ անցան: Եւ օր մը, այդ ժամանակ Պարոն Հրանդ Կիւզէլեանը ունեցաւ հարցեր Թուրքիոյ Կառավարութեան հետ, ու բանտարկուեցաւ: Քեմփը մնաց առանձին, եկեղեցին մնաց առանձին: Ես եւ տիկինս գացինք հոն, եւ սկսանք հոն աշխատիլ՝ Պարոն Հրանդ Կիւզէլեանին տեղը, որովհետեւ ինքը բանտն էր. եւ նոյն ատեն զինքը բանտէն ազատելու ջանք թափեցինք:

Բայց հիմա այս եկեղեցին որ կը տեսնեմ լեցուած, ասիկա ինծի համար կու գայ զարմանալի պատկեր մը, որովհետեւ՝ որպէսզի այդ եկեղեցին չգոցուի, այդ եկեղեցին կայուն մնայ, ուստիկանութիւնը եկեղեցիին ձեռք չդնէ, գիտե՞ք ի՞նչ կ'ընէինք. պատուելի ալ չէր մնացած, քարոզիչ ալ չէր մնացած, ամէն Կիրակի կ'երթայինք եկեղեցի, դոնապան մը ունէինք, դոնապանը կը նստէր հոն, տիկինս կը նստէր, երեք զաւակներս կը նստէին, անոնք կ'ըլլային ժողովուրդ, եւ կ'ըլլային քարոզիչ. կու գայի հոս, Աւետարան կը կարդայի, ու եկեղեցիին դուռը բաց կը պահէինք: Տարիներով այսպէս ըրինք, հինգ տարիներ: Բայց այդ հինգ տարուան ընթացքին պետութեան ճնշումը աւելցաւ մեր եկեղեցիին վրայ, եւ օր մը մեր ձեռքը դրկեցին թուղթ մը, որը մեր ձեռքէն կ'առնէր մեր Թուրքիայի քեմփը: Այն պարապ դաշտը, որ մենք դրախտի վերածած էինք, քանակաւ տարի ետք մեր ձեռքէն առին՝ ըսելով թէ ժամանակին ձեզի սխալ արտօնութիւն տրուած է որպէսզի այս հողը առնէք: Առին մեր ձեռքէն, եւ մինչեւ հիմա ալ տակաւին պետութեան ձեռքէն էր, որ ծախեց ուրիշ երրորդ անձերու: Բայց հիմա պայքար կը տանինք որպէսզի այդ հողը եւ ուրիշներ, ուրիշ համայնքային կալուածներ՝ որ մեր ձեռքէն առնուեցան, անոց համար մեր ջանքը կը թափենք որ ետ առնենք:

Ուրեմն պզտիկուց կարդացած եմ Ս. Գիրքը՝ գրեթէ մի քանի անգամ: Սաղմոսներ սորված եմ գոց, եւ մրցանակներ շահած եմ դպրոցին մէջ: Իմ տիկինս, որ ինքը Աւետարանական կրթութիւն առած է մինչեւ այսօր կը յաճախեն կրկին տակաւին Կեսիկ Փաշայի Հայ Աւետարանական եկեղեցին: Եւ հիմա, փա՛նք Աստուծոյ Կեսիկ Փաշայի Հայ Աւետարանական եկեղեցին շէնցած եկեղեցի մըն է: Շնորհիւ Վեր. Գրիգոր Աղապալօղլուի, ամէն Կիրակի եկեղեցին կը լեցուի, ա՛յ մեր ատենուան երեք հոգիներ ժողովուրդ չկայ, լեցուն է, օտարներ ալ կու գան. զանազան լեզուներով եկեղեցին իր գործունէութիւնը եւ առաքելութիւնը կը շարունակէ: Մինչ այդ մենք, Հրանդ Տինք ըլլալով, նետուեցանք քաղաքական կեանքին քիչ մը, մամուլի կեանքին, եւ հիմա կը շարունակենք մեր պայքարը որպէսզի Թուրքիոյ մէջ, պետութիւնը ճնշումը վերցնէ փոքրամասնութիւններու վրայէն, նամանաւանդ հայերու վրայէն, եւ մեր իրաւունքները ետ տայ մեզի, մեր կալուածները ետ տայ մեզի, եւ ես մեծ յոյս ունիմ որ օր մը այդ քեմփը՝ որ մեր ձեռքէն առին, նորէն մենք իրենցմէ ետ պիտի առնենք անպայման եւ անպայման:

Մասնաւոր շնորհակալութիւն պիտի յայտնեմ ոչ ձեզի թերեւս, քան ձեր պապերուն Աւետարանականներուն, որովհետեւ մենք մանուկներս՝ զիրենք կը կոչէինք բարերարներ այդ ժամանակ: Բնաւ չեմ մոռնար, ամէն



Ծնունդին, ամեն Նոր Տարւում ընթացին եւ Զատնուան ընթացին, Ամերիկայէն մեզի կու գար բարեբարներէն նուիրատուութիւններ, ամէն անձ, ամէն տղայ ունէր բարեբար մը որ չէինք ճանչնար բնաւ, Ամերիկայէն մէկն էր: Բայց մենք իրեն ձեռով մը զաւակ դարձած էինք, եւ մեզի իր բաակէն կը դրկէր նիւթական աշակցութիւն, եւ մենք ալ իրեն շնորհակալութիւն կը յայտնէինք՝ գծելով պատկերներ, եւ կը դրկէինք իրենց՝ ամէն Նոր Տարւում ընթացին՝ մեր սրտի խօսքերը:

Ուրեմն այդ սրտի խօսքերս անգամ մը եւս հիմա կ'ամփոփեմ հոս, բոլորը միասին, ձեր պապերուն եւ ձեր անձին մէջ անգամ մը եւս այդ շնորհակալութիւնը կը յայտնեմ, որ ըսեմ թէ երեք հարիւրէ աւելի մանուկներ ազատեցիք Անատոլիէն, եկան հոն, կրթութեան, հայերէն սորվեցան, հայկական մշակոյթը առին, եւ ինչո՞ւ չէ, թերեւս անոնց մէջ ոմանք ալ տակաւին, առած իրենց Ս. Գրքի ներշնչումով, այսօր հաւատացեալ զաւակներ դարձան ազգին համար: Կը բարեւեմ ձեզ որ ինձի առիթը տուիք: Շատ շնորհակալութիւն ձեզի, եւ կը մաղթեմ ձեր գործերուն մէջ, գործունէութեանց մէջ յարատեւ յառաջդիմութիւն: Շնորհակալութիւն: □

## Վեր. Դոկտ. Ռընէ Լեւոնեանի Այցելութիւնը Յունաստան

**Վ**եր. Դոկտ. Ռընէ Լեւոնեան եւ իր ազնիւ Տիկինը՝ Սիլվի Ամերիկայի Հայ Աւետարանական Ընկերակցութեան Կարգադրութեամբ երկու ամիսներով Յունաստան գտնուեցան, ուր Վեր. Լեւոնեան իր ծառայութիւնը մատուց Յունաստանի Հայ Աւետարանական Եկեղեցւոյ զանազան բնագաւառներէ ներս:

Վեր. Լեւոնեան, իր կեցութեան շրջանին, ամէն Կիրակի, Վեր. Վիգէն Զոլաքեանի կողքին, իր շինիչ քարոզութեամբ պատգամաբերը եղաւ Կենաց Բանին, առաջնորդելով նաեւ Տիկնանց աղօթաժողովները:

Նմանապէս Վեր. Ռընէ Լեւոնեան ներկայացուց երեք դասախօսական երեկոներ, նկարներու ցուցադրութեամբ:

Առաջին դասախօսական երեկոն տեղի ունեցաւ, Երկուշաբթի Սեպտ. 12-ին, Նիւթ ունենալով՝ «Ապրիլ 24-ի ցեղասպանութեան Ոգեկոչումը Կ. Պոլսոյ մէջ»:

Վեր. Լեւոնեան՝ նախագահը Եւրասիայի Հայ Աւետ. Եկեղեցիներու Միութեան, ներկայ գտնուելով Պոլսոյ մէջ իրագործուած 2014-15-16 տարիներուն Ապրիլ 24-ի օրուայ Ցեղասպանութեան յիշատակի ծրագիրներուն, նկարներու ցուցադրութեամբ ներկայացուց իր վկայութիւնը:

Անգամ մը եւս Հրանդ Տիկնի յիշատակը ոգեկոչուեցաւ բազմահազար ժողովուրդի ներկայութեան:

Երկրորդ դասախօսական երեկոն տեղի ունեցաւ Երկուշաբթի Հոկտեմբեր 3-ին, Նիւթ ունենալով՝ «Սուրիոյ, Իրաքի եւ Լիբանանի քրիստոնեաներու Իրավիճակը»:

Վեր. Լեւոնեան որպէս անդամ Ֆրանսական պատուիրակութեան եւ զանազան երկիրներէ ներկայացուցիչներ, ներկայ գտնուելով Ապրիլ 2016-ին Միջին Արեւելք, այցելելով Սուրիա, Իրաք եւ Լիբանան, տեսակցութիւններ ունեցան եկեղեցական եւ քաղաքական արժանաւոր եւ պատասխանատու անձերու հետ, որոնք մօտէն հետաքրքրուեցան քրիստոնեաներու, փոքրամասնութիւններու եւ հայոց իրավիճակով:

Երրորդ դասախօսական երեկոն տեղի ունեցաւ Զորեքշաբթի Հոկտեմբեր 12-ին, Նիւթ ունենալով՝ «Հայ Գաղութը Եւրասիական երկիրներու մէջ - (Ռուսաստան, Վրաստան եւ Աբխազիա)»:

Ներկաները մեծ հետաքրքրութեամբ հետեւեցան Նիւթին, որ շատերու համար անծանօթ դաշտ մըն էր: Յիշենք որ Ռուսիոյ մէջ աւելի քան 2,500.000 հայութիւն կայ, Վրաստան նաեւ իբր հին հայկական գաղութ այսօր



ունի 300.000 հայութիւն եւ Աբխազիա՝ 60.000, որ կը կազմէ երկրի ընդհանուր բնակչութեան 1/4-ը:

Նաեւ Վեր. Լեւոնեան, ուղեկցութեամբ Վեր. Վիգէն Զոլաքեանի պաշտօնական այցելութիւններ տուաւ Յունահայոց Առաջնորդ՝ Գերշ. Տ. Խորէն Սրբ. Արք. Տողրամաճեանի, Յունահայոց Թեմի Առաջնորդական Տեղապահ՝ Հայր Խորէն Վրդ. Առաքելեանի, Յունաստանի Հայ Կաթողիկէ Վիճակի Առաքելական Կառավարիչ՝ Հայր Յովսէփ Թ.Ճ.Վ. Պեգեգեանի, Հ. Հ. Դեսպան՝ Վսեմաշուք Տիար Ֆադէ Զարչոյեանի, Նեոս Գոգմոսի Հոգեւոր Իովիւ Տ. Նարեկ Քիւյ. Շահինեանի, ինչպէս նաեւ «Ազատ Օր» Օրաթերթի խմբագրատուն, ընդունեց «Նոր Աշխարհ» Շաբաթաթերթի Տնօրէն Պրն.Սարգիս Խաչատուրեանի այցելութիւնը, այցելեց Զաւարեան վարժարանի եւ Գոքինիոյ Աւետարանական Մանկապարտեզի աշակերտներուն, ուր սիրալիւր ըմբռնելութեան արժանացան:

Վերապատուելիները՝ եռօրեայ այցելութեամբ ներկայ գտնուեցան Հիւսիսային Յունաստան՝ Սելանիկ (Թեսաղոնիկէ):

Առաջին հերթին, ծանօթացան ընդհանուր հայ գաղութին, յատկապէս Հայաստանէն ներգաղթող ազգակիցներու իրավիճակով: Մօտէն ծանօթացան Հայաստանէն եկող աւետարանական փոքր խումբի մը, հետաքրքրուելով անոնց հոգեւոր, ընկերային եւ մշակութային կարիքներուն: Գործակցելով, խորհրդակցելով տարբեր Նիւթերու մասին լուծումներ որոնեցին թէ ինչպէս կարելի է հասնիլ վերոյիշեալ կարիքներուն: □

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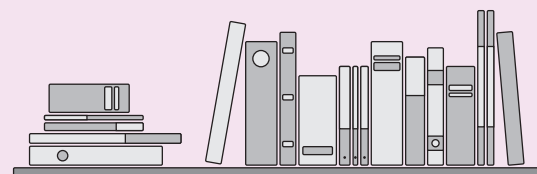


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## Շնորհակալութեամբ Ստացանք **Received With Thanks**



The AMAA acknowledges with gratitude receipt of the following new publication

**Պատմաբանասիրական Բննարկումներ Հայ Ժողովուրդի Պատմութեան  
Ճանապարհին - Դոկտ. Երուանդ Հ. Բասունի**

**The AMAA Board of Directors and the staff wish to extend their heartfelt condolences to the families of the following deceased friends.**

Marie Achkarian  
*La Verne, CA*  
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*Methuen, MA*  
\* Jack Arabian  
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\* Kaspar Alexandre Attarian  
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\* Hazel Kalfaian  
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Varouj Melkon Kassouni  
*Yerevan, Armenia*  
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*Fullerton, CA*  
\* Gary Garbis Terzian  
*Boca Raton, FL*  
Rev. Mihran Torosian  
*Abkhazia*

\* *Memorials designated for AMAA*



## Yervant Abadjian

Yervant Abadjian, beloved father, grandfather, brother, uncle and friend, passed away on January 1, 2017 in Brussels, Belgium.

Yervant was born in Aleppo in 1922 to Aintabtsi parents, Apraham Abadjian and Arousiak Daghlilian-Kazandjian. His family moved to Beirut, Lebanon when he was an infant. A gifted student, Yervant chose to stop his studies to start work and help sustain his family.

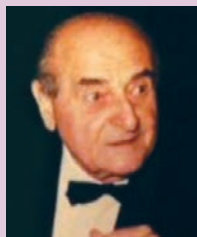
After several successful business ventures, Yervant engaged in the trade of diamonds where he excelled. One of the first Armenians involved in that trade, Yervant won the respect and admiration of all people with whom he dealt, from Africa to Antwerp, not only for his business acumen and intelligence, but also for his honesty, moral integrity and work ethics.

Yervant became a generous contributor to Armenian charitable causes in Lebanon and elsewhere. Having moved to Belgium at the beginning of the Civil War in Lebanon, he helped establish the Armenian Evangelical Church in Brussels. His advice was always sought by Church members.

He was heart-broken following the passing of his beloved wife Vera in 1996 and found courage to become, in his own words, both father and mother to his children, to whom he was so deeply devoted. Cruelly, he had to endure further pain and sorrow at the loss to illness of his cherished eldest daughter Magda in 2010. This broke his heart and spirit, and he was only the shadow of his former self.

Yervant's soul and heart will remain alive in all those whose lives he touched. He is survived by his daughter Myrna Abadjian, son, André (Sandra), granddaughter Nora, sister Béatrice Simonian and family, brother Krikor (Juliette) Abadjian and family, brother Puzant Abadjian and family, and the entire Abadjian, Simonian, Daghlilian-Kazandjian, Nazarian, Karamanoukian, Shnorhokian, Keyvanian, Bodourian, Atayan, Ekizian and Meguerdichian families.

Funeral services were held on January 11 at the Armenian Apostolic Sainte-Marie-Madeleine Church of Brussels followed by burial at the Verrewinkel Cemetery. □



## Moses Abajian

Moses Abajian, beloved husband and father, passed away on May 23, 2016 in his home in Glendale, California. He was 88.

Moses was born in an Armenian refugee camp in Aleppo, Syria on January 19, 1928 to Sion and Bedros Abajian, both natives of Marash and survivors of the Armenian Genocide.

He was the eldest of four siblings: Stepan, Zevart and Maral; and the grandchild of Moses and Feridé Abajian and Armenag and Elmasd Helvajian from Marash. As a child, he was an avid reader and used to read well into the night under a gas lamp, against the advice of his parents.

Upon completing his elementary education in 1940 at Hye Avedaranagan Pétél Varjaran (Bethel Armenian Evangelical School built with the help of his father), he attended a French Catholic middle school. Following middle school, he attended Aleppo College, where he became the first in his family to graduate from high school (1946) and attain an Associate degree (1948).

After some years of managing a student store co-op on the Aleppo College campus, he continued his education and received his Bachelor of Arts degree in English Literature at the American University of Beirut (AUB) in Lebanon (1958) on a full scholarship. Moses went on to be a teacher at Bethel and also at Lazar Najarian Yeghortagan Varjaran, an Armenian High School in Aleppo. He also served as the Principal of Bethel for two years, after which he opened his well-known bookstore in Suleymanieh, Aleppo in 1965 called "El Dorado." His bookstore was a gathering place for his friends and other members of the community. Elderly men and women would often stop by Moses' bookstore to ask him for help when they needed someone to fill out forms or negotiate and advocate on their behalf.

In 1972 he met and married his wife Hermine Khanzadian. Their common interest in literature and education was a point of great attraction for him. They had two children, Suzie and Ara, who loved to keep their father company at his bookstore. Although Moses' bookstore was his main occupation, he continued to be involved in the world of education and served as the Chairman of the Board of Directors for Bethel Armenian Junior High School from 1975-1983.

In 1988, at age 60, he immigrated to the U.S. and began a new life with his family in Glendale, CA. He worked at Glendale High School (GHS) for 20 years as an ELL



instructional aid. He went above and beyond what was expected of him and was highly respected by his students and colleagues. After his retirement at the age of 81, he enjoyed time with his family and two grandchildren. Moses was a voracious reader and a master of words.

He spoke five languages fluently (Armenian, English, Turkish, Arabic and French) and had a vast knowledge of history, literature, etymology of words and poetry. Moses took great joy in writing poetry, singing traditional Armenian songs from Marash, playing backgammon and Belote, making anagrams and religiously watching Jeopardy. Moses was strong willed, resilient, gentle-hearted and honest to a fault. Although he was reserved, he had a great sense of humor often employing puns, rhymes and wordplay. He was well loved by his many friends, family and colleagues.

Moses is survived by his wife Hermine, daughter Dr. Suzie Abajian (SPUSD Board Member) and son-in-law Sean Abajian, son Ara and daughter-in-law Julie, his grandchildren Emma and Eric, two sisters Zevart Bedikian and Maral Jabrayan, four nieces and seven nephews and their families.

Funeral services were held at the Wee Kirk O'The Heather located in Forest Lawn Memorial Park in Glendale, CA on May 31. □

## Zvart Apelian

Zvart Apelian, devout Christian, passionate Armenian, proud Kesabtsi and an exemplary educator, passed away on January 31, 2017 in Los Angeles, CA.



Zvart was born in Keurkune, Kessab in Syria to Khacher and Karoun (nee Apelian) Chelebian on September 2, 1924. Her siblings were her brother Dr. Antranig Chalabian, a noted historian; brother Hovhannes who became a well-known industrialist in Syria and sister named Anna, who passed away at the age of 17.

From her early teens, Zvart was very active in the Armenian Evangelical Church of Keurkuneh, Kessab tutoring the young, directing plays and conducting Sunday Bible classes. She received her primary education in Keurkuneh and her middle school education in Kessab. Realizing her potential, Rev. Garabed Tilkian secured a scholarship for her to continue her education at Aleppo College. Unfortunately, due to waging of the world war, ties with the U.S. were severed for her to continue receiving financial assistance, thus her schooling was interrupted in her senior year. She completed her secondary education years later at the Armenian Evangelical

College in Beirut and graduated from the Armenian Studies Program at Saint Joseph University in Beirut.

Following graduation, she embarked on her teaching career and taught at the Armenian Evangelical School of Kessab. She married her Kessabtsi compatriot Hovhannes Apelian in 1946 and the couple moved to Beirut, Lebanon where they started raising their family of two sons, Vahe and Garo.

Zvart resumed her teaching first at Ahranjian School and then Sourp Nshan Armenian School of Beirut. She taught for the next 25 years at the Shamlian Tatigian Armenian Evangelical School in Nor Marash, Bourdj Hamoud, Lebanon and later joined the rest of the family who had moved to the United States. In the interim she also taught at the Hripsimants School of Armenian Sisters of Immaculate Conception.

After moving to the United States, she taught at the Ferrahian High School in Encino, CA and for 15 years at the C & E Merdianian Armenian Evangelical School in Sherman Oaks, CA from which she retired in 2001 to attend to her ailing husband. Throughout her five decades of teaching she taught Armenian language, literature, history and the Bible.

Zvart was recognized for her contribution to the Armenian Diaspora education. The Armenian Department of the Gulbenkian Foundation invited her for teachers' training in England, so did Soviet Armenian Government invite her to Armenia for the same purpose in the 1960s. The Union of The Armenian Evangelical Churches in the Near East presented her a Certificate of Appreciation in 1986 upon ending her 25 years of teaching at the Shamlian-Tatigian School. In 1996, the late Catholicos of All Armenians Karekin I Sarkissian bestowed upon her a Saint Mesrob Mashdots ecclesiastical decree accompanied with an encyclical proclamation naming her a dear daughter of the Armenian nation. By far it is the cordial and loving reception her formers students bestowed upon her that moved her the most.

In 2007, her son Vahe had a select collection of her articles published as a book titled "I and the Teaching." In 2016 he also had her hand written collection of the group recitations she had arranged and directed published as a book in its original superb handwriting. She was moved to the Ararat Nursing Facility in 2013 where she received tender loving care.

She had the misfortune of losing her young son Garo in December 1988. Her husband passed away in July 2007. She is survived by her son, Dr. Vahe H. Apelian; three grandsons, Daniel, Hovig and David

and a granddaughter Christine and four great-grandchildren.

The funeral service was held on February 9 at Forest Lawn Cemetery. Donations may be made to the Shamlian Tatigian Armenian Evangelical School or the Kessab Educational Center for schools in Kessab. □

## Charles Babikian

Charles "Chuck" Andrew Babikian Jr., Owner of CBS Realty in Harrington Park, NJ and a proud Marine, passed away peacefully on December 14, 2016. He was 86.

Charles grew up in Leonia, NJ, the son of Charles Sr. and Irene Babikian. After graduating from Leonia High School, Charles served in the Marine Corps at the end of the Korean War as a first lieutenant in the amphibian tractor battalion brigade. He graduated from Wagner College with a bachelor's degree in business, while playing football as a defensive end and serving as team captain for the Wagner Seahawks. He applied his belief in teamwork and hard work, combined with a knack for personally connecting with people to run his real estate company. Charles never considered retiring: right to the end he was asking his four children to return calls as he was entering Hospice. His belief in working hard and playing hard was displayed in all forms, including his love of skiing with his family at Mad River Glen, VT and playing tennis over 40 years with numerous foursomes, followed by their ritual happy hour. He loved seeing his family together and would use every holiday as an excuse for a family barbeque.

Charles is survived by his four children, Jeffrey (Eileen) Babikian of Ramsey, NJ, Glenn (Barbara) Babikian of Sugar Loaf, NY, Carol (Scott) Haegle of Succasunna, NJ, and Karen (Jeff) Lupinacci also of Succasunna. He also leaves behind his sister, Alice Philibosian of Ft. Lee, NJ, eight grandchildren, Ryan, Lauren, Michael, Brendan, Matthew, Brooke, Brian and Kyle, and his beloved nephews and niece, Emil, Alan, Chip, Anita and Stephen.

His life was celebrated at a funeral service for family and close friends at the Armenian Presbyterian Church in Paramus, NJ on December 20. □

## Nishan Basmadjian

Nishan Basmadjian of Pasadena, CA passed away on November 10, 2016. He was 72.

Born on February 6, 1944 in Beirut, Lebanon to Vartan and Alice Basmadjian, Nishan



attended Armenian Evangelical College from preschool through high school and graduated in 1964. He attended Haigazian College where he received a Bachelor's Degree in English in 1968. After graduation, he came to the United States for his graduate studies at Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo, MI earning his Master's Degree in Library Science in 1970. He returned to Beirut and became a librarian at Haigazian College. In 1974, he moved back to the States and settled in Los Angeles, California.

In 1979, Nishan married Salpie Chakelian, and they were blessed with three children Alicia, Vartan and Sareen. They built their family life in Pasadena, where he lived for 37 years. Nishan opened a driving school and was a driving instructor for the next several years. In 1987, he became librarian at the University of La Verne's Armenian Library and in January 2001 he began his employment at the Arleta Department of Motor Vehicles. He looked forward to going to work because he loved his job and the friends he made. He continued working there until his last day.

Nishan had an immense passion for photography; he never went anywhere without his camera. He loved books, movies, politics and music and loved to sing. He was a well-rounded man with a great knowledge about everything. He was devoted to the Armenian church and culture, serving in numerous Armenian schools, churches and organizations. For 37 years, he was a member of the Armenian Cilicia Evangelical Church in Pasadena.

He considered his children his best accomplishment. He loved his sons-in-law, Seth and Nareg, as his own. In March 2015, he experienced the greatest joy when he became a grandfather to Vahe, who put the brightest smile on grandpa's face.

Nishan was a unique individual. He enjoyed having long conversations with people and sharing detailed anecdotes about his life. He was always willing to help others. He had a way of making everyone feel special and didn't miss opportunities to compliment them. He had an optimistic outlook and took everything in stride. For him, each day was a gift, and he didn't take his blessings for granted.

Funeral services were held on November 16 at Cilicia Church followed by interment at the Mountain View Cemetery in Altadena. Memorial donations can be made to the AMAA designated for Syria Relief. □



## John Jamgotchian

After a long and remarkable life, John "Hovannes" Jamgotchian passed away on January 19, 2017 from complications following hip surgery. He was 98.



Born on September 5, 1918 in Marash, Turkey, he was the oldest son of seven children, born to parents who survived the Armenian Genocide. As a young child, he moved with his family to Beirut, Lebanon where he helped his father with the grocery store, was involved with the Boy Scouts and played soccer with the Homenetmen Sports organization.

In addition to his native Armenian, John spoke four other languages fluently. After he graduated from high school, John went to Tripoli, Lebanon, to work with the British as a French interpreter during WWII. After the war, John returned to Beirut where he met a Frenchman who, impressed by John's intelligence and work ethic, taught him the business of photo engraving and eventually sold his business to John.

During this time, John was involved with the Armenian Evangelical Church and the High School Alumni Association where he met Zarouhie "Susie" Yaralian. He was the treasurer and Susie was the secretary. They were married in 1948 and established their home in Beirut.

John often traveled to Europe for business and in 1956 took Susie with him when they visited the United States and Europe. They immediately fell in love with Southern California's Mediterranean climate and considered this new country as a possible new home. When they returned to Beirut, they became concerned with the growing violence and instability in the Middle East and decided to emigrate and start a new life half a world away. In 1958, John was granted a visa to America but it was lost due to bureaucratic complications.

Not willing to wait, he decided to immediately immigrate to Canada and join his older sister, Irene, in Toronto, Canada. They again became involved with the Armenian community. Finding that there was no Armenian Protestant Church, in 1960, John and four of his newly immigrated friends and their families founded the first Armenian Evangelical Church in Toronto, Canada, which, after 50 years, continues to grow and serve the Armenian community in Toronto.

In 1962, John's dream of living in Southern California finally came true. Shortly thereafter, John established his own lithography business

in Los Angeles. After a year, he and Susie purchased their home in Sherman Oaks where they lived for 50 years. He was a member of the United Armenian Congregational Church in Hollywood and served the Church in various offices and committees. He loved to garden, take his family camping, and made time for family trips, especially to the cabin they built in Frazier Park. At age 62, John sold his business and retired. He and Susie spent their retirement years traveling extensively all over the world, visiting 68 countries on every continent except Antarctica. His one regret was that he didn't have a chance to visit India or Tibet.

John is survived by Zarouhie (Susie), his devoted and dedicated wife of 68 years; three children, Nora Jamgotchian, Lena (Edward) Marderosian, and John (Diana) Jamgotchian; and five grandchildren, Megan and Nicole Marderosian and Jayna, James and Jessica Jamgotchian.

Funeral services were held February 2 at Forest Lawn, Hollywood Hills in Los Angeles, CA. The family requests donations be made to the Armenian Missionary Association of America, designated for the Armenian Evangelical Church of Toronto, ON, Canada. □

## Mary Jambazian Mehterian

Mary Jambazian Mehterian, a loving nurse and mother, passed away on October 25, 2016 in Texas.

Born in Beirut, Lebanon to Abraham and Ephronia Jambazian who were Genocide survivors, she was one of seven children. The family migrated to Jerusalem with their first home being a room in Bethlehem. She attended Armenian Nazarene Elementary School then graduated from the London High School in the old city of Jerusalem. She joined the nursing staff at the Augusta Victoria Hospital on Mt. Olive, where she graduated from their nursing program.

The family migrated to Pasadena, CA as displaced people from the Palestinian War. Mary continued working as a nurse at the Hollywood Presbyterian Hospital and then the Hollywood Kaiser Hospital.

She met and married Abraham Mehterian and raised two sons, Glenn and Gary. She continued working with emergency/ambulance cases at Panorama City Kaiser. Following the death of her husband, Mary moved to Morro Bay, CA and began volunteering at local hospitals. When she developed dementia, her son Glenn moved her to Texas to be near family.



Mary is survived by her son Glenn and his wife Senam and her grandson Nathan, son Gary, two sisters, Azniv Muduryan and Ana-his Derian Boolghoorjian and many nieces and nephews. □

## George Selimian

George Selimian, father of Rev. Haroutune Selimian, President of the Armenian Evangelical Community in Syria, passed away on January 16, 2017 in Paramus, NJ.



George was born in 1936 in Aleppo, Syria. He was the third child of his family which included four sisters, Josephine, Catherine, Janet and Violet and one brother, Selim.

In 1959 George married Anais Toroyan and together they made a Christian home and were blessed with three children, Marcelina, Haroutune and Dikran.

George was a professional in the cotton producing industry and an expert on big machinery, winning an award in manufacturing.

In the larger community of Aleppo and in the Armenian Community both in Syria and New Jersey, he was known to be a good-hearted person always caring for others in need. With his humor and kindness, he always brought joy to his environment. He was firm in his Christian belief and attended church services and dedicated time for prayer and personal meditation.

Twenty-five years ago, George and his wife moved to the United States and settled in Paramus, NJ to be near their daughter Marcelina. When George's wife was taken ill and became paralyzed, he took care of her with much love until she passed away in 2011.

George will be remembered with much love by all those who came to know him, especially his children and grandchildren.

George is survived by his daughter Marcelina, her husband Mihran Yakoubian and their three children, son Rev. Haroutune Selimian, his wife Shoghagat (Aparian) and their two children, and son Dikran, his wife Silva (Chobanian) and their two children who live in Greece.

Funeral services were held on January 21 at St. Vartanantz Armenian Apostolic Church, Ridgefield, NJ. □

***Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on. "Yes," says the Spirit, "they will rest from their labor, for their deeds will follow them.***

Revelation 14:13





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